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LEGENDS OF A STATE PRISON.



LEGENDS OF A STATE PRISON;

OR,

Visions of the Tower.

BY PATRICK SCOTT, Esq.



LONDON:
RICHARD BENTLEY, NEW BURLINGTON STREET.
1867.

LONDON : W. CLOWES AND SONS, DUKE STREET, STAMFORD STREET,
AND CHARING CROSS.

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FIRST VISIT.

FIRST VISIT.

“**B**EHOLD it rising on our eyes
Through the thick air of the o'erpeopled town ;
A history—stereotyped in stone—
Of human nature, handed down
Through misty ages, for the wise
To ponder, and the good bemoan.
A palace for the oppressor now,
And now a prison for the oppress'd ;
Or, set to lift its warning brow,
And in his forward fling arrest
The London citizen, ready still
To fight with every fancied ill.

Cells honeycomb its walls to hold
Each hated or suspected thing ;
To mulct a noble of his gold,
Or hide an inconvenient king.
Turret and ditch and walk and green,
Chapel and bastion mixed, bear part
In a picturesque medley, making a scene
To please the eye, tho' it pains the heart ;
Rebel and Royalist floating in pride
Their flags on its height at the turn of tide."

" Yes," answered Elliot, "'tis too true
That history is, as St. John said,
Written on these walls, but all in red,
And its worst pages spread to view.
If the first William first laid deep
The basement of this royal keep,
Its annals shew it fit to be
A Norman tyrant's progeny.

The deeds in its dark precincts done
Might help to make tradition good,
Which saith, that many a dungeon-stone
Was set in mortar slaked with blood."

"Complete the picture," Russell cried,
"And add that Rochester supplied
A bishop—a most useful man
Whose mind could stoop from Heaven to plan
A worthy portion, if not all,
Of warlike tower and prison-wall."

So spake three persons, pleasure-bound ;
For pleasure may e'en here be found
By those whose hearts, not eyes, survey
The stream of life pursue its way,
Whether through flowery plains it run
Placidly 'neath a sparkling sun,
Or between gloomy banks confined
It lose its purpose, doomed to find

'Mid weeds and rocks no natural course,
Choked by neglect or wrung by force.

And on and in and round they walked,
And walking mused, and musing talked.
Cried Elliot, "How at Fancy's will

The veil of Time is drawn aside.

In long procession down this hill

I see a troop of phantoms glide :

Some headless stalk, and others trail

The chains that wore the body bare ;

Some young, with faces old and pale

From poison of the prison-air ;

And some whose life would soon have flown

From the old frames, if left alone.

Others hold crowns within their hands,

Viewing them with reproachful glance ;

Of varied sex, from various lands,

Stern Scotland, and light-thoughted France,

And merry England—merry !—Lo
These spectres ! did they find it so ?—
On silently, with ghastly gaze,
 And maimed and bleeding forms they steal,
Or to the frowning Heavens upraise
 Their skeleton hands in mute appeal.
Where are the victims now ? Where those
Who made them ? Will they ne'er repose ?—
The first through ages doomed to show
The signals of their earthly woe ;
The others to behold and hear
With shuddering eye and sickening ear,
Bruised limbs, and open wounds, and, worse,
From motionless lips the endless ‘ curse ? ’ ”

Then St. John cried, “ These walls have seen
Strange sights in the long years between
The time when they and Richard saw
The mob of Tyler and of Straw

Rage numerous near, or force their way
In lesser band within, and slay
The heads of Church and State, until
The Tower, so often stained by ill,
Opened its bloody jaws for good,
And closed them upon Thistlewood.

Now turn and see, beneath that tower
A water-passage, and o'erhead
The 'Traitor's Gate!' The maw of Power
Was by that gloomy entrance fed—
An entrance which the many knew,
An exit for, alas! how few!
All traitors, doubtless, since they were
Weaker than they who sent them there.
Recall the past. Behold, beneath
That dreaded porch, a single barge
Is entering with its freight of death.
One prisoner is its only charge,
And that a woman; youthful too,
Fair as the morn, and fresh as dew,

And she a Queen. Why, tyrant, make
This immolation of her charms?
Can this be done that thou may'st take
Another to thy brawny arms?
None but some few, in wherries seated,
Poor sailors, see her pass that gate,
And they too scared to mourn her fate;
She, whom so late a nation greeted
With multitudinous throat when bound
For this same Tower, before that, crown'd,
She graced the throne on which she sat.
Look on this picture, then on that:
From Greenwich to the Tower, her way
Was marked by pomp, and met with joy;
The sun illumed that golden day,
None fear'd th' eclipse, none saw th' alloy.
Barges one hundred, and half more,
Convoyed her. Every steeple rang:
Men lined the streets and ships the shore,
And banners waved, and minstrels sang,

And, the loud cannon-peals between,
The people cried, ' Long live the Queen !'
Long life ! enough ! Her charms have fed
Her husband's fickle appetite,
Which wants fresh food. Then strike her head
From off her. Hide her out of sight.
Fronting St. Peter's altar-screen
Make her a grave. Long live the Queen !

" What were her sins ? Not that one made
The pretext for the headsman's blade,
But dreams of an ambitious youth
That somewhat warped the heart from truth ;
Light movement, and coquettish glance,
And airy manners fetch'd from France,
Where more is acted than intended—
Slight faults to be so rudely mended !

" When on the murderous block she laid
Her little neck, ' O ! Thou,' she said,

‘ Who art the Way, the Truth, the Life,
Knowest that I, the harsh-judged wife,
Do not deserve this judgment.’—Then,
As echoed by recording years,
We, with each Christian man that hears
That faint appeal, respond ‘ Amen ! ’ ”

“ Could men,” said Elliot, “ wish to be
Impartial in their cruelty,
And vary carnage, that it hold
In one red clutch both young and old ?—
Here lieth, cognate with the Crown,
The last pure-born Plantagenet ;
Grand-daughter of the man who set
Kings upon thrones, or dragged them down.
What matter, guiltless, and grey-haired,—
Nor innocence nor age was spared,
As Margaret of Salisbury found
The fate her royal father met,
When that mysterious dungeon-ground
Reeked with the blood of Clarence wet,

And groans and shrieks had little power

To tell what never will be told,—

The deed done in that dark-groined hold

Within the base of Bowyer's tower.

Her scaffold rose upon the green—

What, Geoffrey Pole, was then thy thought ?

Thy window opened on that scene—

Thou sawest—'twas thy speech that brought,

Or helped to bring, thy mother there,

With her bent form and scanty hair.

She will not calmly stoop to die,

And calls for aid, and seeks to fly.

The headsman follows on her tread,

Still striking at her hoary head,

Missing by turns, by turns he hits

And gashes out the life by bits."

On went the three men sadly—each

Was too shut up in thought for speech,

For every spot was prompt to wake
Memories most dark. Then St. John spake :

“ How all the place around us swarms
With too true visions steeped in pain ;
From every side rise dusky forms,

Whose varied woes distract the brain
To judge which is the worst. Give ear,
My friends ! To mark our visit here,
Let us, each one whose pitying breast
Selects a victim from the rest,
Embalm in sympathetic song
The recollection of his wrong.

It may be that these tales will spread
Like palls, to consecrate the dead.”

This pleased them all. This every one
Agreed to do, and so 'twas done,
And when, some little time being fled,
At St. John's home they met, he said,
“ Behold my tale,” and thus he read :—



JAMES I. OF SCOTLAND.

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JAMES I. OF SCOTLAND.

O'ER the sea, o'er the foam-tipped sea,
A ship is speeding, with wings outspread
To the faithless gales off Flamborough Head ;
Like a bird that would fain be free
From hands stretch'd forth to bar its way,
The vessel dips through the ocean spray.
Straight for the coast of France it sails ;
But still more straight and quickly they,
Treading its wet decks, wish it to fly ;
For men weigh things impatiently
When life is in the scales.

Look ! or, should not thy heart be brave,
Look not where over the weltering wave,
Borne swiftly on by the favouring blast,
Another vessel comes fierce and fast.
Armed to the full, like a hawk let slip
At a heron, on that defenceless ship
Downward it swoops : unfit to fight,
Its prey is only armed for flight,
Yet cannot fly, and yields, as most
Have yielded, from the self-same cause,
When might is stronger than right or laws,
And is borne away to the English coast.

Then Orkney's stout Earl, as he eyed
The sword stretch'd idly by his side,
Demurely said, " From out the snare,
Laid long-time in our Scotland there,
The royal bird hath 'scaped, and yet
It falls into another net

Not spread for it. But who will break
The news to him who dreams his son
Is resting in a refuge won,
And cause the old king's heart to ache ? ”

But the young boy, whose life had seen
Ten summers or so, cried out, “ I ween
Things might have turned out worse, my lord !
Far better can I at least afford
To trust King Henry than to be
At home with my uncle Albany.
In jail or palace I have small fear
That I shall sicken on English cheer.
Would my starved brother had chanced to win
Like favour from his Scottish kin ! ”

And both the Earl and the Prince in sooth,
Speaking of ill and good, spoke truth ;

For Rothesay Castle heard a bitter wail
From aged lips, when the quick-travelling tale
Of his son's capture reached the monarch's ears.

Three days, three nights, he cried out, "Such the end!
Such my prophetic fears!

Have I no faithful friend
To rid me of this life? Stern Heaven! bereft
Of him, my eldest, must not one be left

To glad my discrowned hours forlorn?

Where is my second-born?

My son—where is my son?" Three days he cried,
Three nights, and to that question none replied;
But as the fourth dawn shed a sombre ray
Where the third Robert unlamenting lay,
The voice was hushed—the soul had passed away.

Earl Orkney, plunged in anxious thought
Of what might happen there, was brought
To England; but the royal boy,
His charge, found novelty a joy.

And when the heralds came to bring
The Prince to Court, he went, and bore
Himself in kingly sort before
Henry of Lancaster, the King.

The self-made Ruler smiled to trace
Th' incipient monarch in his face,
And took him kindly by the hand,
And cried, " Be satisfied to have
All that thy utmost wish shall crave
But this—to leave our English land ;
And in meantime thou shalt be nurst
To bear an empire—men should be
Trained to endure their royalty—
Till Scotland hail thee James the First ! "

And Henry kept his word. He deemed
That kings should be the things they seemed ;
Not merely rise above the rest
As higher placed, and better drest,

And both in peace and battle fray
Should show their subject hosts the way.
So 'twas that James, the youthful, laid
Foundation for the good that made
The full-grown man more fitly grace
The throne than others of his race.

He, on well-ridden steed, was found
Aye foremost in the tilting-ground ;
Or, trained to wrestling, could lay low,
With graceful strength, his friendly foe ;
Or arrow to the butt let fly,
Low levelled, to its golden eye.
His speech was framed with balanced art
To win the head, or warm the heart ;
Music and mirth by turns beguiled
The leisure which his prudence made,
And every Muse benignly smiled
Upon the court their votary paid.

Two years within the Tower he spent;
And dance, with feast and tournament,
And Science, and what Greece and Rome
Had left for learning, made his home
As pleasant to a man not free
As such a doleful place could be.
Two years—and then he was transferred
(More happy than the royal bird
That droops, howe'er you shift its cage,
Or shut it round with bars of gold)
To Windsor, where his growing age
Had more inducement to unfold.
Years unto years were added there.
Guarded, he strolled in regal wood,
Or filled his health with upland air,
Or gazed in reverential mood
On Nature's charms, when sunset dies
Slowly in variegated skies,
Or the wide-ruling sun is born
From the grey womb-cloud of the morn,

And hill and dale and river spread
Seem lengthening to the Heav'n o'erhead.
The wealth of Nature's soul, when grown,
He had transplanted to his own ;
And the seed-life the boy began
Was ripened richly in the man.

Of bye-gone wisdom, as he read,
His thirsting spirit daily drank,
And there, amid the mighty dead,
Boethius held a foremost rank.
Then, too, his soul was grieved that he,
Whose only crime it was to feel
His country's wrongs too well, should be
The victim of that righteous zeal ;
That such a life, because it crost
Theodoric's movements, should be lost.
He thought how, calm from hour to hour,
Close fettered, in Pavia's tower,

With the best feelings of the sage
Boethius stamped his deathless page ;
Its reasoning to the mind how clear !
How pure its language to the ear !
And which great Alfred, as it stood,
Made Saxon for his country's good.
How well and sweetly did he talk
With Wisdom in his daily walk ;
And how she taught him to employ
His thoughts in making God his joy,
His one delight. He seemed to roll
The curtain up from earth that veiled
His view of heaven, where soon his soul
Would enter, by its angels hailed.

And James, too, learnt as History spread
Her lessons to his curious eyes ;
And once when Night o'er half the skies
Had driven her sombre car, he read

The hateful tale of civil strife
'Twixt Edward and his wolfish wife.
For France, he thought, from monsters nurst
In her wild woods, and brute-like men
Had gathered up whate'er was worst
In different natures round, and then
Had made a spirit that would not rest—
The devil in Isabella's breast.
The food that never seemed to pall
Was blood ; and when she well had fed,
She filled each hideous interval
With joys of an adulterous bed.

Yet the second Edward, though ill-starr'd,
Made his own fate, however hard.
Wanton of mind, in act a fool,
He played a most unkingly part ;
Unfit for a great kingdom's rule,
Unworthy of a woman's heart ;

He showed in that tumultuous time
A weakness almost worse than crime.

But James read on ; then, with a look
Of fear and loathing, shut the book,
And cried aloud, " If such the fare
Served up by marriage, who would dare
To taste the deleterious food
On chance of an unlikely good ? "

And next he sat him down to write
The ideas that crowded on his brain,
And, 'mid the undisturbing night,
Thought upon thought in lengthening train
Assailed his mind, until it grew
Flushed by the pictures which it drew.
Then would he register a vow
'Gainst woman and her wedded love,
To live alone as he was now,
When something near him seemed to move,

And Silence gently sighed, as 'twere ;—

'Twas fancy, or the entering air.

He laughed at his own fears, enclosed

In one lone room, as he was then ;

But next a hand was interposed

Betwixt the paper and the pen

With which, in rash resolve, he thought

To stamp his unromantic thought.

A female hand it was, with all

That makes up beauty, white and small,

And finely-shaped ; and as he tried

Again and once again to write,

The delicate hand returned to hide

The parchment from his puzzled sight.

One finger was raised up, and on

Its taper length a gold ring shone,

Displaying in its central part

A ruby shaped into a heart.

He stopt deterred—his purpose crost

By violence of a natural law.

The vision fled, but he ne'er lost
The memory of the thing he saw.
Months died, as months had died before,
But hope for ever lived—once more
To see that hand, and almost grew
To wishing for the body too.

One morning, James in his grey tower
Sat at his window, to inhale,
Not free himself, the freshening gale,
That toyed at will with fruit and flower.
The casement open stood ; its bars,
Which shut from outward life their charge,
Let in the view of nightly stars ;
And of a garden fair and large
By day, with all the sights and sounds
Reposing in its quiet bounds.
Between the flower-plots filled with scent,
And round them too, broad alleys went ;

And at the corners where they met
Arbours of trellis-work were set.
A hawthorn-hedge, with intergrowth
Of junipers, enclosed them both.

He laid, with sorrow overgrown,
His head awry on the cold stone,
And cried, " All wants I here possess
But one thing which that roving bee
Enjoys in full. If I have less
Than this, what have I more than he ?
Nay, have I not the opened mind
Which can hold converse with its kind,
And which much culture hath made fit
For intercourse of wish and wit ?—
And yet that one thing wanting sours
The sweets of solitary hours,
For, 'tis a day—a beaming day ;
See, lovers all, and worship May !


The calends of your bliss begun,
Date from the season and the sun.
The small birds ply their anxious wing,
Drest in new feathers by the spring,
And each, in shrill-tuned voice elate,
Thanks love and weather for its mate.
What is this Love, this King of Earth ?
The power of counterfeited mirth
Which books discourse of ? Is it real,
Or a fantastic false ideal ?
Make me, O Love ! if god thou art,
Free as the bird upon the bough ;
And when my chains are off, I vow,
Thou shalt replace them on my heart.

“ And have I not a heart to glow
With grateful passion ? and ”—but here,
Startled, he stopt and gazed, for lo !
A graceful form came floating near,

As now with song and now with talk,
She loitered down the garden walk.
That she hath rank and worldly state
He deems, for two attendants wait
Upon her will. Her hair confined
In a pearl net, forbids the wind
To rudely scatter tress from tress.
Sprinkled with golden dust. Her dress
Is a white tissue, looped, and meet
To show her pretty-stepping feet.

To his heart backward rushed the blood.
And, rooted like a tree, he stood,
Filled by the golden-arrowed boy
With a new knowledge and a joy.

A small-limbed greyhound from whose neck
Hang jangling bells, is at her beck ;
And from his gambols round, when cried
By name, comes fawning to her side,



But see ! he starts, he stares, his cheek
Grows pale—the cause not far to seek ;
For round her own fair neck behold
A jewel, hung by chain of gold,
Heart-shaped and with a ruby gleam,
Larger than that which in his dream
He saw, and longed to see again,
Upon her hand. His labouring brain
Asks for no more, content to greet
Such prophecy, though half-complete.

Nearer she comes. She plucks a flower,
'Gainst the barred window of his tower
His white face strains, then turns to flame ;
He sees her hand—it is the same
He saw before, of rings though bare :
'Twas left for him to place one there !
He heaves a sigh—a complex sigh
Of admiration and regret.
Alas ! he cannot get more nigh—
Far off as Heaven, he'd love her yet.

She hears, and turns her gaze above ;

Her eyes find his, and silently

They seal a compact ne'er to die

As long as life allows for love.

This compact he, in the old way

Of lovers' law, renews each day,

By passion-prompted lines, let fall

From window-sill, forgetting all

The lessons History taught of late

Of Isabella and her mate.

And be the weather foul or fair,

She seems to like that garden air ;

While he, in corresponding strain,

Aye celebrates his faithful Jane.

Thus, by prophetic fancy fired,

He told the tale which Love inspired.

It was the time, methought, when Cynthia rinsed

In black Aquarius her gold-tressèd hair ;



I pined, for much my busy spirit winced
 Beneath long thrall. Sleep seized me unaware,
 Or maybe swoon, and on a garden fair
I seemed to gaze where things more rich in hue
Than a king's clothing, nature-vested grew.

One flower conspicuous sparkled ruby-red,
 And to the soft wind bent with wondrous grace ;
But, as it raised its petal-crownèd head,
 A flower no more, it showed a woman's face
 On human shape. "The Goddess of this place
Art thou," I cried, "whose beauties, that enslave
My simple heart, might cause a world to rave?"

Her hair with pearly fretwork was enclosed,
 And gold-bespangled ; on its top a crown
Of blossoms, red and white and blue, reposed.
 Her morning robe flowed negligently down,
 A single clasp confined the floating gown ;
While in the scarf that veiled her breast above
Shame held its hand before the gaze of love.

Then turning at a sudden sound, I spied

A heavenly form clipt in a crystal cloud.

A rosy boy was nestling by her side

All plumed with wings. "O thou!" I cried aloud,

"Venus divine!"—but at a sign I bowed

My head and listened while she spoke. "The cure

Of Cupid's wounds by me alone is sure.

"She whom thou first did'st look on, like to thee

Is mortal; but if thou would'st pluck and wear

This beauteous flower, thy amorous suit must be

Approved by Wisdom, for things seeming fair

May be foul inwards." Then to vision there

A second form arose, as if the skies

Had been uncurtained to a mortal's eyes.

A golden helmet on her head she wore,

Which gave her beauty a strange look, severe,

It would not else have had. Then she: "Before



Thy love may prosper in its claims, nor fear
Bad end when granted, it must be as clear
From wicked filth, as waves that break in green
On the far shore of some unvisited scene."

Then I : " I swear by Christ's redeeming cross
Where my best hopes do hang, and there alone,
Without that flower all gain to me were loss.
'Tis the first passion that my heart hath grown ;
No second seed can in that breast be sown.
The soul that burns with one unwavering flame
Reflects on earth the heaven from which it came."

She smiled and said, " I see thy heart, and know
Its love is purer than a passing lust :
But first to Destiny Celestial go,
Whom fools call Fortune ; from her lips thou must
Obtain consent. For children of the dust,
As ye two are, no joy can be, unless
She breathes the fiat which alone can bless."

Then did my hope climb high, and unto Heaven
Kneeling, on grateful knees I poured my praise,
That unto me so sweet an end had given
Of solitary nights and prison-days,
'Twas kind to sink if only so to raise.
Here first I saw—here must I learn the art
To pluck that flower, and lay it on my heart !

The course of a true love was this,
Which *did* run smoothly on to bliss ;
Whatever rocks beset its way
To dash it rudely into spray,
Or foul its lucid depths, or stem
Its flow, were not placed there by them !

Over Windsor's royal grounds,
Hark to the bell that merrily sounds !
Love seemeth to say therein, " Come, see
A princely pair made happy by me—

Me who can kindle a flame, to catch
The train ready laid
In man and maid,
'Neath palace-roof or a cottage thatch."

Lo! where first of a noble train
Stand Scottish James and English Jane.
Tie the knot—make the willing bondage sure.

Mitre and helm in mixed array,
And veil and coronet grace the day;
And he who gives the bride away

Is Henry of Agincour!

The tie that made Jane Beaufort one
With Scotland's monarch, was never in life
In a passing thought or a wish undone;

And James, who with gold
Bought his freedom, sold

His heart in change for the heart of a wife!

And Henry, maybe, thought aside
To satisfy a politic want

In making James and Jane allied :

Her the great-grandchild of old Gaunt,
And him the heir of Scotland's throne.
Such union might compose the tone
Of the two nations, each tow'rd each,
And fill the never-filled up breach
Betwixt them, and efface the scars—
The memories of their border wars.

Yet good is slow, and not before

King Henry's warlike soul had fled

Was the young Prince set free to tread

His native soil once more.

Into Prince James's soul the muse

Of Poesy did so infuse

Her passionate spirit, that to him

The future did not loom so dim

As unto colder minds—or say

He gave imagination play

Like other bards, and took for true

The pictures that his fancy drew.

However, ere he northward sped
In answer to his people's call,
And placed upon his youthful head
The crown his father wore, with all
The perils sown on either hand,
The growth of a half-cultured land—
One midnight—when such marvels seem
To happen mostly—he beheld
In waking vision or in dream
A female figure, closely-veiled,
And slimly tall, draw near and cry—
Her hand raised upwards as she spake—
“King that may'st be! Futurity
Permits thee a life's choice to take.
Remain in England—should this please,
Thine shall be days spun out in ease
In a long thread, and slowly worn
By age and use, not rudely torn :
But—seek thy country—work and fame,
Good done, and all that's in a name

Bequeathed for future times to say,
 ‘ If half what History holds to view
 Of the first James’s deeds be true,
Worse men than he have had their day,’
These shall be thine, with bitterer fate
Of life cut midway short by hate.”

Then James beholds two pictures there
Drawn on the canvas of the air.
One represents each peaceful scene
Of garden trimmed, and country green ;
Or social feast and friendly talk,
Sound sleep and meditative walk ;
And all the joys that strew with flowers
The pathway of inglorious hours.
Then an old man, white-haired and propt
 In a soft chair, to sit and smile
 At his grandchildren’s gambols, while
The works of life have well-nigh stopt

Which threescore years ago were new ;
Now just worn out with idle wear,
And when they are, none but the few
Within a narrow ring will care.

Next, in the second picture, crowned,
And on a throne, himself he sees ;
And knights and nobles gather round,
And bow their heads and bend their knees.
But upon many a face there dwells
A scowl—the passion-cloud which tells
That, soon or late, when time shall call,
Th' exterminating bolt will fall.
Plainly it speaks, and speaketh thus—
“ This king is not the king for us.
Reforms, so titled, that curtail
The power that dwells 'neath coat of mail ;
That insolently interfere
Betwixt the peasant and the peer ;

Which punish every outrage done
By noblest born, or villain's son ;
And say, the Law alone shall strike—
These things are not the things we like."

But the scene melts, and leaves no trace—
When lo! a bedroom takes its place,
With roof thick-set on ponderous beams,
While light through narrow windows streams.
Upon the bed a form lies stiff,
And torn with well-placed wounds, as if
The men who dealt hard measure knew
Beforehand what they came to do.
'Tis his own form : the head, discrown'd,
Is compassed with a glory round,
As 'twere a people's love e'en now
Had gathered o'er the corpse's brow.

James saw, and seeing, understood
These mixed displays of ill and good.

He felt what England was to him ;
The present bright, the future dim,
If he should seek, in venturing forth,
A rugged welcome from the North ;
And knowing all the vision meant—
The bitter end of going—went.

And so it was. And should we ask,
What matter if the finished task—
The task of fifteen years, assigned
By Him who sees where we are blind—
Was followed by a rude death, such
As his?—it may not matter much.
But it was much in James—'tis yet
For all, too, in high places set,
The chance of ruling well and long ;
 To foster all things that refined
 The church's heart, or taught its mind ;
To raise the weak, control the strong ;
Draw out the cords, repair the flaws
Of the old net-work of the laws,

To largely catch, and safely hold
Unruptured by the weight of gold.

'Twas at the time of Christmas yule,
When love and thankful joy should rule
In memory of the saving Birth
That made Heaven possible to earth,
When Perthshire saw the deed which stained
That festal time with hateful gore,
And James the useful fell, and rained
His life out on its convent floor ;
Though his brave wife did interpose
Her slight form to the showering blows,
And Catherine Douglas' arm, before
It brake there, barred the entrance-door.

He who first struck him was no less
Than the King's uncle. Which is worse—
To die for half a land to bless,
Or live, like Athole, for its curse ?

Three days upon his brows was set
A fire-hot iron coronet.
This title o'er his head they hung,
 "The King of traitors!" The fourth day
They lopt it from its trunk, and flung
 The relics, like a rag, away.

Peace to the royal bard whose lyre
 In Scottish homes so sweetly rang!
When young from old, and son from sire,
 Learnt what their common fathers sang.
How much of all the mellowed worth
 That makes a nation's music, since
Those times till now, derives its birth
 From James the First, her minstrel-Prince!

SECOND VISIT.

SECOND VISIT.

A SECOND time the three men bent
Their steps to the old Tower ; and first
Spake Russell : “ How each spot seems meant
For men and deeds when at their worst.
Long passages in secret run,
For steps that would be secret, round ;
Damp massy rooms shut out the sun,
And cells are never reached by sound.
Here men grew old, and scarcely saw
The stones their constant treading wore ;
And women shrieked for help, and heard
Their own cries echoed, and no more.

Walls are casemated, and moats are deep,
Strong to defend, and safe to keep.
Portcullis, and gate, and turret—these
Are the armour worn by tyrannies.”

Next St. John : “ Yes. We may suppose
The whole place fashioned for one end—
The riddance of opposing foes ;
Or worse, a once familiar friend.
And yet so often was this plan
Adopted upon hill and green,
We think with Essex, ‘ That the Queen
Might put the body of a man
To better use than lop its head.
In his case, too, it might be said,
Though other sufferers’ blood was spilt
For less than Robert Devereux’s guilt,
His bravery, youth, and generous hand,
And popular credit with the land,

Might have been placed, with some amount
Of patience, and some slight foreseeing,
On the State's books to more account,
Than to be blotted out of being.
The Queen, 'twixt love and hate, recoiled
From killing him outright—then kill'd ;
So Nature's handy-work was spoiled
By one self-doubting, yet self-willed.
' God's light ' oft graced her lips, 'tis true ;
Would that her heart had had it too !”

“ Oft lips and hearts have small accord,”
Said Elliot, “ both in loon and lord.
Yet History's conscience cannot say
Elizabeth had no cause to take
Th' impetuous rebel's life away,
Who slight excuse thus far could make
That in past contests he had been
Hailed victor by his amorous Queen.

So—as she *had* given in—his will,
With larger aims, might drive her still !
One step too forward sealed his fate ;
 For, frightened by the length he ran,
His monarch was compelled to hate
 The traitor while she loved the man.
And knaves of State lived, doubtless, then,
 As in our duller times they do,
Who used the hands of other men
 For tools, but kept their own from view.”

“ Yes,” answered St. John. “ Centuries cast
Their shadows to obscure the past.
How hard to solve, how full of fear,
The riddles History reads us here !
Here the sixth Henry died—the cause ?
 Speak, ye who know it ! Died of grief,
 They said. Could he, the ducal chief
And self-made king, swear, ‘ Thus it was ’ ?

Or did sharp blade or poisoned bowl
Divorce the body and the soul
Of one on such a throne to sit
In soul and body both unfit,
Although he borrowed, but in vain,
The help of Margaret's brisker brain ?

A young king dead, and by his side
His ducal brother !—true, they died.
But how ? Who knows ? Did he yclept
The hunch-back Prince ? Who now, except
By likely guess, can penetrate
The mystery of their savage fate ?”

Then Elliot : “ Things have happened here
Nearer in time, so seen more clear.

James the last sent—to show how Power


Could vary victims at its ease—

A file of Bishops to the Tower.

Lo ! see them pass to bend their knees

In yonder chapel. Hark! the Seven
Thank boldly an indulgent Heaven
For this last suffering, and its cause—
God's glory and their country's laws.
At Westminster the Seven were tried;
The Seven, too, were found guiltless there.
Then shouts triumphant rent the air,
And citizen with soldier vied
In hailing the great victory won
O'er the false Charles's bigot son:
This was the storm's presaging tone.
Strange, too, how interested ears
Heard not the sound so full of fears—
The earthquake growling 'neath a throne!"

"Romance, it seems, without done wrong
Cannot exist in prose or song!"
Cried St. John. "And worst men can breed
Some interest by a daring deed."



This passage might be that whereby
Lord Mortimer of Wigmore fled.
Captive for life, he was but dead,
Yet might revive if he could fly.
So for the first tempestuous night
He planned the order of his flight.
He bid the Constable of the Tower
To supper. By the midnight hour
Mirth raged within and wind without ;
The howling storm, the wassail shout.
And oft Sir Stephen Segrave quaffed
The sweets of his narcotic draft,
And the guards slept—O sound divine!—
Oppressed by medicated wine.
' Lord Roger ! long may'st thou live here
To give thy friends such costly cheer ;
But my lord drinks not as the rest !'
His lordship smiled, and plied his guest ;
And when Sir Stephen snored, with all
His followings, through the chamber-wall

Lord Mortimer broke, and from on high
Into the palace kitchen nigh
Sprang downward.—Ready for ascent
A ladder-rope, and up he went,
And down the other side. Behind
He left the grey Tower-walls to find
Moored to the bank a shallow boat.
Quickly he cross'd the river-moat ;
There, servants, horses—muscles strained,
Spurs reddened to outride the hunt
That follows fast—then Hampshire gained,
A waiting ship, and France in front !”

Then Russell: “ Time hath much to tell
Since his stream flowed and flowed, before
Our days, two centuries back and more.
Let Fancy mount against the flood.
We stand within a noisome cell,
Bad even here, where none are good ;

Prisons for prisoners. So, by right,
This holds one. Now survey the sight.
What is his person ? Ringlets fall

In flaxen richness from his head ;
Comely in face, not over-tall ;
With tint where yellow masters red ;
The outward bearing and the mind
Steadied by thought, by courts refined ;
Blood warm and bounding, and a name
His mistress muse hath raised to fame.
What is his fault ? Perhaps he knows

Some things a king might wish unknown.
Alas ! for them who can disclose


The wants and weakness of a throne.
Perhaps he'd given advice—the best,

Being so, may cause the most offence,
Unto a noble patron, blest

With handsome face and scanty sense ;
And blamed the love he could not cure
For a most filthy paramour.

And so it was no difficult thing
To misdescribe him to the king,
Who, pitiful himself, would lean
Tow'rd thinking other men as mean.

"Behold his punishment, and say
If Hell hath one more fearful still.
A man whom torture fails to kill,
Although it rack him night and day;
For life unto his entrails clings,
With poison gnawing at their strings.
'The food that should be strength and health
Is drugged and dowed by devilish stealth,
Yet keeps the wretch alive to bear
'The dance that burn and fangs that tear.
More give him more: so let him eat
Corruption in the tainted meat,
And stick out the stave that cry
For death to come him, but not die



More nourishment, so called,—more yet !

Nay ! never heard the victim's shriek.

Fresh poison ! make it stronger. Let

The vulture have a double beak.

Stop ! not for pity, but no more

Is needed. See him writhe and roll,

Like a crushed insect, on the floor—

This man with an immortal soul !

Not much remains. The sufferer grows

More feeble, and more faint his throes.

A few sharp twitches, as if pain

Had done its worst to rack his brain,

Then all is still, save what the breath

Stirs in its flight. Can this be death ?

The heart—pulse—beat yet. Feel them !—Nay,

There is no fear. Be quick ! Away


To burial with the harmless clay.

“ O God ! thy vengeance, tho' in part,

Is sometimes seen on earth. The heart

Of Somerset—'twas something this—
Grew sickened of his dear-bought bliss.
He saw his loose and lovely wife
As a fiend linked to him for life,
While she ungrudgingly returned
The hate with which her husband burned.
'Tis something more, that History says
The beauteous demon's latest days
Were darkened by disease, which must,
 (Being of a strange congenial kind),
 Have forced upon her dying mind
The memories of her loathsome lust."

Homeward the friends in silence bent
Their footsteps, musing as they went;
And many days past o'er them ere,
Rumoured, they met again to share
The welcome Russell gave and said,
"Now read thy tale." And thus he read:—



SIR JOHN PERROT.

•



SIR JOHN PERROT.

FROM green unsounding lanes ;
From quiet gardens robed by Spring
In prodigal colours ; from sheep-tufted plains
And windy hillocks ; from black fields, where sing
Uncultured ploughmen, as they toil
To channel seed-graves in the soil ;
From watching birds upon the flick'ring wing,
And scenting smells, and seeing sights,
And all that rural scenes dispense
To fill each sharp yet lazy sense
With that in which it most delights,

O! haste away, and stand within

The monster town, whose tawny air
Is laden with the ceaseless din

Of life, in search of living there—

Of human insects, that unfold

Their wings in constant flight for gold.

There, in that kingdom formed of streets

Take up thy stand, and all that meets

Thy outward sense heed not nor hear,

But turn thy gaze, and bend thine ear

With all the mind supplies of power

To penetrate that massive tower.

Draw up the curtain dropt between

The acted past and living scene,

That grandest of all plays to view—

Alas! too sombre in its hue—

Performed by crowds in ancient days

For crowds unborn to hiss or praise.



Another victim ! Wherefore start ?

Among so many what is one ?

When Power can get its work well done
To cage the limbs, or break the heart,

'Twere folly not, though Saints may preach,
To do the wrong within its reach.

This prisoner is a man, large-souled,
Large-bodied, whom the narrow hold
Of this dark dungeon-cell hath bowed
To nearer level with the crowd.

A giant, who, when he had tasted

For the first time of prison fare,
Was worried by the shame and wasted
To the weak thing now sitting there.

His soul, instinct with cholerick fire,
Was rash, though noble in its ire,
And when it saw things evil, rushed
To clear the earth of what was base,
While in the ruin that took place
Some mingled good was sometimes crushed ;

Himself a ruin, which his foes
Might ev'n admire, like one of those
Which early Greece hath left to raise
The love and hate of modern days,
The love that sees, with fond regret,
So much of beauty living yet ;
The hate that cannot calmly view
The deeds itself must fail to do.

But still there is, in man's decay,
One part, when others drop away,
Which to the wreck the strongest clings ;
Thus yet survives within his eye
Enough of grandeur to supply
The faces of a dozen kings.
'Tis said by them too, who aspire
To know at Court what may be known,
His father was a king, the Sire
Of her who fills the throne.

But now we pity as we glance
At him, the mighty hunter, who,
In days fast-fading from his view
Within the present night, was sung
As follows in a foreign tongue,
For the great deeds he did in France.

When the hills brightened o'er with the first look of day,
The grim beast of chase in his mountain-frank lay,
And Perrot's sword-blade flash'd unstain'd to the light,
That was dull'd o'er with blood ere the fall of the night.

Fear never till then chilled the heart of the boar,
For he ne'er had met *him* the destroyer before,
Who came forth to meet him with falchion and steed,
And a hand for the blow, and a soul for the deed.

He fled, as the hurricane swoops in its flight;
He charged, as the storm rushes forth in its might;
Yet his strength was but weak, and his speed was but
slow,
To cope with, or fly from, the arm of his foe.


From the back of his steed down jump'd Perrot the
bold,

While, awe-struck, each huntsman stood still to behold;
And the Queen shrieked to witness the fate of the brave,
While our king he stepp'd forward to succour and save.

But little cared Perrot if succour were near,
As his arm knew no weakness, his breast knew no fear;
Then the brute ground his tusches to rush on his prey,
And the man stood erect to be slain or to slay.

Up that hand rose, and down like a thunder-bolt fell,
And the Englishman's sword did its work of death well;
For with neck severed through, as a knife cuts a string,
The boar rolled in blood at the feet of the King.

And such a man as this to dwell,
Cribbed in a solitary cell!
The soul that should be gathering fame
In slaying men, or slaughtering game,




In might all living men beyond,
Fashioned by Nature's wisdom, free
As the illimitable sea,
To stagnate like a country pond!
Why here? *That* let his foes declare—
How, seated in viceregal chair,
His mind was one that could not brook,
When force could crush, to kill by guile
The discontent that walked the land;
And so he laid a heavy hand
Upon the rebel crew that shook
The quiet of a sister isle.

Why here? Two kings were once his friends,
And a queen loves him still, 'tis said;
With love of royal hearts there blends
Some danger to the object's head;
And when the last was crowned, he bore
The canopy with other three.
Proud then in the world's sight to be
Exalted, but to sink the more.

The Queen, because this man subdued
Her Irish foes, and broke the power
Of the sea-robbers, made the Tower
The measure of her gratitude.
Strange, when a country, served too well,
Repays the service with a cell!

Then hear his tale : the facts are true,
And claim attention, though not new ;
For Nature does not change the seeds
That bear the crop of human deeds.

'Tis a hard thing to govern well.
To govern Ireland—let them tell
How hard *that* task is who have tried.
'Tis a hate-breeding thing beside
To make the law of right our own,
And ask advice from Heaven alone.
And as Sir John's vice-regal rule
Was strict to harshness, every fool




And every villain swelled the cry
That linked his name with tyranny.
Lo ! an Archbishop, he the head
Of the pure faith whose law is love,
Did hate him with the godless zeal
Which churchmen by profession feel.
A Chancellor, one who sat above
Th' unlearned mob, in legal state,
Did hate him with a lawless hate ;
And, as if more were wanting still
To heap the measure of his ill,
A priest, whose life, due long ago
To justice, beyond hope was spared,
(Because his mercy willed it so) ;
Risen from the grave as 'twere, yet dared
To curse the man to whom was due
The life yet left him thus to do.

But still his foes could not prevail
By means in which such warriors trust —

The open charge, the whispered tale—
To sink their victim in the dust.
For the Queen liked him, 'twas believed ;
She liked him, as her nature could,
Imperious, obstinate, and shrewd ;
Which did most cruel things, then grieved,
With half regret, and feigned surprise :
A nature with a vision strong
To see the good before its eyes,
And yet too weak to love it long.
And Perrot knew her faults, and true
To impulse, spake the things he knew ;
But when, as then, he stood erect
Before her, something like respect
And loving reverence rose between
The king-like subject and the Queen.

His haters thus no help could find
In natural things to suit their mind ;



So next the supernatural hailed
As fitting guide where Reason failed.

And thus it was. Sir John was bound,
Upon a cruise, to catch and beat—
This he resolved—the Spanish fleet.
As his barge pass'd the Queen's, she found
Good reason in his handsome face
To send for him. Her royal grace
Around his neck a jewel hung
On massy gold chain fitly strung,
And cried, "Wear this for me : beware
Thou lose it not, nor cease to wear.
Do this, and no calamity
Shall ever light on thine or thee."
'Twas clear this talisman supplied
The place of angels by his side.
What could they do when such a charm
Preserved the hated man from harm ?

"Then have thy proof," she cried, "the thing
Is clear. Ev'n did a hundred share
My lover's love, I still would cling

To what I have. I could not bear
To lose my little portion there.

I do not deem it strange, who know
What that man is, that love should flow
Tow'rds him, as streams to ocean run,
The many to be lost in one."

"With such good feeling," he exclaimed,
"Thou might'st bear with me, if I named
A lady who affects the throne
Which Heav'n made thee to share alone."

"That is," she answered, "thou would'st try
A woman's curiosity,
When jealous hints are breath'd in vain.
But what in this hast thou to gain?"
Then Wryriott: "To please thee—my end
In doing this to gain a friend."

"Would it *quite* please me?" she replied.

"No matter! now thy tale unfold.

Fear not, my breast shall ever hide

The secret struggling to be told.

I cannot cease to love. This may

Be folly, but 'twill have its way."

He answered, "I will name no name,

What thine eyes see thy tongue shall blame.

Listen. He has, as well thou know'st,

A jewel fair; his constant boast

Is, the Queen gave it him." "He speaks

What all men know for truth," she said.

Though o'er the pallor of her cheeks

There mantled a disturbing red.

"How can all know," he cried, "what none

Was by to see, or saw it done?"

"But his own word?" said Blanche. Awhile

He paused, then answered with a smile,

“The truth, if told thee, to my mind

Were cruel, and Sir John is kind.

He could not give thee pain—now hear,

Dear lady!—dare I call thee dear?”

And on he went, unheeding now

The frown that slightly roughed her brow.

“If thou can’st manage so that I

May meet thee, and, Sir John not by,

May see that jewel, I will bring

The man who made, and knows a spring

Which, touched by skilful hands, will show

A portrait, and a name below.”

“Which does not for original claim

A monarch?”—cried she. “Nor the name

Elizabeth!”—he added. So

He worked on her, then turned to go,

And with a look which made it seem


That love was chastened by esteem.

What cannot woman conquer, who has made
Her mind up for success ? Her eye disarms
Objections first ; and face and form arrayed
For fight, are argumentative with charms,
While the lips, pouting markedly, display
The price, unspeaking, they are there to pay.

'Tis night, when they, they only are awake
Who watch for vice, or work for virtue's sake.
'Tis night, when stillness in great cities reigns,
To favour pilfering hands and studious brains ;
Night, when health sleeps, and sickness turns to find,
And turns in vain, a posture to its mind ;
Night fraught with dreams, which in themselves may tell
Whether they flow from Heaven, or rise from Hell.
With what a fulness is it charged !—More strange
Than light's real scenes in compass and in change.
Incongruous vision, and imperfect scheme,
Abortive movement, and unfruitful dream ;

Mix up the whole of what a town of men
Is doing, thinking, fancying, feeling then,
And if it could at once be seen, 'twould be
The maddest motley of humanity !

That night, Sir John, worn out by toil,
 Chanced in Blanche Parry's house to be ;
No strong-armed tiller of the soil
 Slumbered more peacefully than he.
'Twas said too he had drunken deep
Of cups provocative of sleep.
Came Wyriott then, and with him came
A man—he did not need a name—
For a court-jeweller his mien
 Was awkward, and at times 'twas rude,
Yet whensoever it *could* be seen
 His eye looked dangerously shrewd,
And where thoughts best unspoken lurk.
Less fit he seemed for speech than work :



A man of business he, who reckoned
The first a hind'rance to the second.
But Wyriott kindly made th' amend,
And talked for both himself and friend;
And when the casket which, where'er
Sir John went, travelled with him there,
Was brought below, and she had placed
 The treasure in those skilful hands,
 He steps near, speaking still, and stands
Between her and the light, in haste
As from a sudden thought, and cries,
" List, dearest lady, and be wise
In time—time flies—but 'tis not yet
 Too late to stop this search, if thou
 Wilt say the word, and say it now,
And spare thy future from regret."

Then she : " 'Tis folly to excite
 My wish to see, and then to say
Be blind ! now let me have a sight
 Of this great beauty ! " " Madam, nay !

I said not beauty !” he replied.
“ There I must be the judge,” she cried :
And going tow’rd the man, he held
 The casket out—on silken bed
 The jewel resting there—and said,
Looking askance, “ I am compelled
To own myself mistaken here.
I cannot find the spring. ’Tis clear
’Tis not the ornament I made,
Yet were the two together laid,
But for the missing spring, I durst
Have sworn the second was the first.”
“ No doubt they’re *very* like—but own,”
Cried Wyriott, in a sneering tone,
“ The fool that thou hast been to make
So inconvenient a mistake,
To waste this lady’s time, and cast
 Suspicion on myself beside.”
Then Blanche exclaimed, “ The minutes past
 I would to years have multiplied


To prove that he, in whom I live,
Deserves the heart I'm forced to give."

And so they parted, each from each
With smile and bow, and civil speech.
And all seemed pleased with all (whate'er
The reason) that had happened there.

But when Sir John to Erin's land
Returning re-assumed command,
And dealt th' impartial blows of law,
There followed what his foes foresaw ;
His rigid rule, thus far unwise,
Raised up such countless enemies,
His virtues failed to make amends,
And right the scale by winning friends,
And add, too, that in his estate

The serpent's cleverer than the dove :
So, with too rare exceptions, hate
Is wiser and less weak than love.

Then, in some ill-conditioned hour,
They worked upon the Queen to write,
And, in her own tyrannic might,
Abuse him for abuse of power.
Well knew they when that missive came
Into his hands, the passionate man
Would find in every line that ran
A match to set his soul on flame.
“God’s name! on what a slippery height,”
He shouted, “stands a favourite!
Confound those natures that caress
To hit the harder when the whim
May strike them. Would she liked me less,
And left me free to sink or swim,
I’d stem this sea, and all its stir,
If not weighed down by help from her!
Heaven knows which are the worst to bear—
Intrigues of heart or politics.
The former form the greater snare
With passions that are hard to fix.



Thank God! that by the kindred blood

That fills my veins I'm placed above

One risk at least, else had I stood

In peril of her spurious love.

But what?—Should once the royal mind

See the man only, and be blind

To the half-brotherhood that lies

Between her and her fantasies!"

Coarse words! Without one phrase toned down,

Reported to the royal ear;

And they who saw that ominous frown

Knew, and were glad, the storm was near.

The utterings of an honest heart,

Though erring in its wrath, were all

That all his foes, with all their art,

Could bring in proof to work his fall.

Soon said, soon told those words, and yet

They sent the strong man to his doom,

Where soul and body waste and fret,

Longing to move, but wanting room.

Behold him, lessening hour by hour,
Cramped in that ignominious tower.
And Blanche, too, comes to meet him there.
Say, was it pity that allowed

That visit, or the wish that she
Might view the stern man bent and bowed,
And, being part of him, might share
His degradation?—both would be
Shocked to be so seen, so to see.

The shuddering of a hopeless grief
Preludes some broken words, and then
Tears force their bounds, and rain relief;
And she exclaims, "Most wronged of men!
Yet 'tis thine own fault if too long
Thou dost endure a needless wrong.
That talisman—for so men *will*
Call the Queen's gift—thou hast it still.
Send it her—claim her bond with thee.
Demand thy freedom, and be free!"

Then he : " Dear Blanche ! 'twill grieve thee sore—
That talisman ! 'tis mine no more ;
Lost—stolen ! and one in outward face,
Made like it, nestling in its place ! "

Shrieking, upon her knees she falls,
And cries to him in piteous tone,
" Light breaks upon me, horrid light ;
Mine is the fault, and mine alone.

I have offended in thy sight
And Heaven's !—Heav'n help me to atone !
I will—I'll go." And when at last,
As reason re-assured her brain,
And cleared her choking voice again,
She told of Wyriott and the past,
And his two visits, and his plan
To bring that clever-fingered man ;
And added, " I will seek the Queen,
And tell her all, and step between

Her wrath and thee. I'll get it back."
Then fevered by a fresh attack
Of passion, she throws up her hands,
And cries "No, no. This wrong demands
My life. Ten lives were all too small
For justice. Take it! I would fall
By thee—thou'rt strong, thou'rt just. I wait
My sentence, and embrace my fate."

He lifts his hand up to disguise
The grief that glistens in his eyes ;
And in a voice once firm and high,
Now jarred and shrunk by tyranny,
Says calmly, "May thy life, Blanche, be
As safe from all men as from me!
Whate'er the worth that pardon hath
From a degraded man, 'tis thine.
There is no place for pride or wrath
In such a crippled heart as mine.

All that the strong man was of old
Is broken in this gloomy hold!"

Then she: "My sole love! I will go,
Regain this jewel first, then throw
Myself at the Queen's feet, and trust
To rise not ere I make her just.
Those who best know her humours say
She will not take thy life away."

"Ah!" he exclaims; "with good name gone
The life hath perished, for the man
Is not a soulless brute that can
Be cursed and beaten, yet live on,
And eat the food its lord bestows
To give it strength to bear more blows.
And if you ask of my disgrace
'What is't?' I answer, See this place!
When he who hath done work and well
Is, like a felon or a fool,
Made safe, or punished in a cell—

That worst of slaves where menials rule—
Too silly or too criminal
To mix with men beyond its wall,
With fruit and leaves both gone ; what, Blanche,
Saith God ?—‘ Cut off and burn the branch !’
Yet might’st thou, love, when I am dead
Do kindness to my injured name,
That when the now hard times have fled
The future may find less to blame,
And cry, ‘ Perhaps this man was not
So bad to merit all he got !’ ”

Then Blanche weeps sore, and vows to make
Her life one duty for his sake,
To gain the jewel lost, and right
His fallen fame in England’s sight.
More tears, more vows, and heart to heart
Prest fondly, and the lovers part.

Days pass, and swell to weeks ; and yet
Blanche comes not—Ah ! can *she* forget

The dearest and most faithful? Nay!

He will wait calmly—one more day.

It comes, not she. Lone man! No more shalt thou

Imprint thy kisses on her living brow;

No more shalt thou behold her face

Until the archangelic trumpet sound

The judgment-day of Adam's race,

And Evil be cast down, and Faith raised up and
crowned.

She hath but gone before thee in the death

Which shall be thine ere long;

The gentle and the strong—

One slain by slow degrees, one slaughtered in a breath.

She had sought Wyrriott—found him—poured

A storm of anger on his head

In his own house. If not restored—

That jewel—she would fly and spread

The case before the Queen, and then—

He bowed, that wiliest of men,

Confessed his fault, and said, "No need
To publish—yet how bad that deed !
Follow me, and thy hands shall hold
That jewel soon, and I be bold
To ask for pardon." Then they went
By turns in mounting and descent,
And winding ways, until their tramp
Sounded more hollow on the stone.
They reach a room ; 'tis dark and damp
And silent, fit for deeds of ill
To be done there, and not be known.
She shudders, and, too late, stands still,
Calling on Wyriott—no reply.
She strains her vision—none seem nigh.
And then a push, a shriek, a heavy fall,
The splash of water, and an echoing wall,
And at the bottom of a deep well lies,
A mass too crushed for lingering agonies,
What once was Blanche. 'Twould sicken love to view
That erst fair form and face from which her errors grew.

True heart to a false love—false ! Yet may all
Who seek not to be judged, forbear to cast
The first stone at another, lest at last
The weight of their own sins o'erwhelm them in its fall.

Wait on, Sir John !—not long. The shortening
breath,
And shrinking form ; these are the seals of Death.
Soon will he come to claim thee, soonest best ;
Thy hope is dead—with it then die the rest !
Heaven may be kind to him whom right divine oppress.

Weeks past, and at the wonted hour
There came the jailor to his cell,
And asked if all was well,
That is, if yet he lived to feel the weight of power.
Yes, all is well, as far as life was ill
For him who lies stretched out and still,
The food untasted by his side,
The meagre fare which law supplied—
O waste it not ! 'Twill feed life's flickering spark
Within some other wretch, till all grows dark.

Peace to that noble spirit! Is it peace
Upon the throne? Is there no bitterness
In having one good servant less?

Her loss is his release.

Release from earth to him is giv'n,
And unto her, perchance, a lessened hope of Heav'n!

THIRD VISIT.



THIRD VISIT.

FOR the third time—it was the last—

The three friends found themselves within
This famous Tower. Then Elliot cast

A glance around, and, “They who win
The game,” he cried, “must count the cost—
The more won, maybe, the more lost.

Where are they now who planned the strength

Of these stone-walls; scooped prison-cribs

From out the thickness of their ribs,
With chains and chill and gloom, not meet
For brutes, and burrowed in their length

Thin passages for secret feet?

A doleful town, with all things near

For dwellers there, as aids to grief.

And that religion lack not here,

Their holy heads three chapels rear

To God, where Satan's self was chief.

What writings upon dungeon-walls !

And coats-of-arms, more fitly matched

With palace-gates and castle-halls ;

And humble names, and verses, scratched

With a nail's point,—poor efforts these

Of the cramped mind to stretch for ease ! ”

And as again the three men stood

In Peter's chapel, Russell said :

“ ’Twould suit the fancy of my mood

To sleep one night here with the dead.

I dare think I should conscious be

Of motions which I could not see,

And sounds, like words, within my ear,

To make their clouded lives more clear,



Whose only rest for heart and head
Was found beneath the stones we tread."

Then St. John: "Surely in the night
When ghostly visions rise by right,
Poor Perrot's spirit came to tell
The tale which thou hast told so well.
Would thou could'st so sleep here, to know
If he, whose heart was cracked by woe,
Suspected traitor in his day—
What days those often were!—would lay
That heart, and all its feelings bare,
Gerald Fitzgerald of Kildare!
After his own vext spirit left

Its battered house, say, could it feel
The mortal terrors that bereft

His kin of life? Could it reveal,
If those past suffering contemplate
The living victim's kindred fate?
Three brothers and a son, all killed
On the same plea! The headsman spilled

Their blood, to warn the crowds who saw
The itch of treason cured by law.
Can joy and pain torment or please
 A soul from earthly bondage free?
Can spirits gaze on sights like these?
 Can spirits weep for what they see?"

Then Elliot cried: "How gladly I
 Would pass a year within the cell
Of my great namesake, if thereby
 I could with him more closely dwell.
'Twould be like leaving earth below
 For where pure suns eternal shine,
To enter on that mind, and know
 The spirit of so great a shrine.
Suffered by Charles—('tis a strange thing
 In our weak eyes to look on power,
 Heav'n-granted, e'en for one short hour,
O'er such a man to such a king!)"—



Suffered to languish in a den,
Like a wild beast, and there to die,
Because he would not damn his pen
To a historic infamy,
And write recanting words, and cry
For pardon—he, whose heart and mind
Were strength and sense and truth combined—
To him who was a living lie!
And when his children stooped to pray
That they might take their dead away,
And give it fitting burial where
His sires lay buried, then replied
The King, right royally, ‘He died
In prison. Let his grave be there!’

“ And yet, a great man never dies.

His voice is heard from age to age ;
And Elliot’s tomb, in pilgrims’ eyes,
Is like a marble-graven page,

Recording what great things are done
For Freedom, ere the fight be won!"

How often, too, must Charles's eyes—

When conscience kept the King awake—

Have seen the ghost of Strafford rise,

With painful look, and lips that spake

In words heard only by the heart,

'False Prince, and falser friend thou art!'

Thank God that in whate'er we may

Fall short of England's children then,

We cannot have such kings as they

To rule o'er us degenerate men.

Then Russell: "Ever to my view

It seems most strange that those in power

Oft live so merely for the hour—

Its instant good, or false or true.



E'en granting that their thoughts ne'er reach
Beyond the grave that's dug for each,
They scarcely seem to cast one glance
To the long earthly life that lies
In waiting for their memories ;
Nor build upon the likely chance,
That no good man will be the friend
Of their past selves, nor e'en the bad defend."

"A problem hard for human brains
To solve," cried St. John. "Harder far
Than weighing out the earth in grains,
Or measuring space from star to star,
When a man, nervous overmuch
To faintest breath, or slightest touch,
That wounds his pride, or lowers his fame,
Or breaks his ease, can trust his name
To worlds unborn, nor cares to guess
If Time shall blacken it or bless."

Then Russell : " Samples may be had
Of men, like goods, completely bad,
Who doubtless merited the doom
That here consigned them to their tomb
Before the time ; or dragged them hence
To purge by death some black offence.
But the most had—so caged and slain—
Some grace of heart, or gift of brain,
That vexed the mind or curbed the hand
Of those who then misruled the land ;
That cared not for a despot's frown,
Or sought to purify a crown,
And drew its earthly lightnings down.

" We may admire More's bold content
To meet the fate his victims met.
Bigot in creed and action, yet
He had most excellent element
In his compounded nature. Placed
In notable sight of all, he graced

The senate and the bar ; sedate
And shrewd in council or debate,
And used for best, to smite or save,
Th' imperfect light his conscience gave.
Sentenced, and to the Tower again

Conveyed, twice did his daughter spring
To clasp him in her arms, and rain

Her grief on his dear face, and cling,
Till torn off, to his aged frame,
How many kings have known the same,
Or felt, in that supremest hour
That mostly stains the pride of power,
When their death-rooms drew many a guest,
That Love was present 'mid the rest ? ”

Quoth Elliot : “ Pause awhile before
The Bell-tower. By its gloomy door
See white-haired Fisher enter in,
To suffer for the monstrous sin

Of thinking there are certain things
Unlawful for the best of kings,
E'en though as great and good as he
Of six-times married memory !
The Bishop's food, he wrote, was less
Than strength required ; and then his dress
Hung, rag-like, on his feeble form,
Which age and winter wanted warm ;
And yet he lived untended through
All wrong his enemies could do.
'Twas hard to waste their cruelty
On an old man who would not die.
They could not wait for time to kill,
And so they slew him on the Hill.

“ On London's populous bridge, 'twas said,
On a pole's point they fixed his head.
The wrinkled face filled out and grew
Each day more life-like in its hue ;

And for two weeks the talking town
Gazed at it till 'twas taken down."

"Enough of bloody green and hill,"

Cried St. John. "Sickening visions these!

And captives starved and strick'n, until

The life leaks outward by degrees—

Scaffolds that rise, and blows that fall,

Lopt trunk, and secret funeral.

I seem to breathe a thick dun air,

With a grim Death's-head grinning through,

As if the more he ate he grew

In favour with his feeders there.

Away, my friends! and not again

To tread this slaughter-house for men.


For a short time I fly to hide

In some far hamlet's quiet nook,

Where naught is seen or heard beside

Green field and flower and babbling brook,

Contending with the pebbles, strewed
In vain attempt to bar the road.
And when our meeting next takes place,
We will, without the leave or grace
Of despot asked or giv'n, discuss
The thoughts and feelings wakened here,
And talk of wrongs without a fear
That the like fate will light on us,
And feed the mind, and fill the hour,
With other visions of the Tower."



ARABELLA STUART.

ARABELLA STUART.



ERECT a room, stone-cold and bare,
With sickness in the drooping air,
And set a weeping prisoner there ;
A room built up with cruel art,
 Within whose gloomy hold there falls
 No sunshine on the barren walls,
No hope upon the heart.
Shut out the blueness and the green
Of sky and earth. Not here be seen,
Not here be heard, or sound or sight
To soothe with melody and light ;
To give the stagnant mind employ,

And ease the weariness of woe
In its debased estate, although
They may not raise to joy.
A friendly voice, the comforting touch
Of friendly hands, these were too much,—
Exclude them; enter and behold,
And Fancy sees what History saw of old.

And who the prisoner? One, may be,
Who stands upon so low a round
Of life, that they of higher place,
As custom words it, by Heaven's grace,
Who top the ladder, cannot see
The wrongs of aught so near the ground?
Nay, in that prisoner's veins there rolls
The blood which kings, though small of name
Or cursed by all their subjects, claim
O'er less ethereal souls.

Then, is it one of that rough sex, endowed

With harder hand and sterner breast

For struggling with the struggling crowd,

And which, inflicting most, should suffer best ?

Ah ! 'tis a woman from whose face

The long extravagance of wrong

Hath not yet worn away each trace

Of gentle beauty and of grace

That unto youth of right belong.

Yes, young, if this be taken for truth,

That years when counted make up youth.

Her mind, which God created rich,

And gifted with a loftier tone,

His creatures' cruelty, made wise

By all the arts which hate supplies,

Degraded from its envious niche,

And left it poorer than their own.

Then say at least 'tis justly done,

That here, imprisoned and forlorn,

She reaps the fruit of some outcryng crime—

Harsh fruit unmellowed by the sun.

Nay, 'tis the crime of being born ;

'Tis Nature's fault that she can show

Two birth-lines from dead kings, and so

A living monarch shakes to see

The rival that may cast him down,

And crushes in captivity

All claims to a dishonoured crown ;

And dimly wise, forecasts the hour

When armed revolt shall waste the land,

And battle, never-welcome, lower,

And feels the awful reins of Power

Shake in his nerveless hand ;

'Tis thus this man upon a throne can find

No fresher plan than play a tyrant's part,

For cowardice that blinds the mind

Will brutalize the heart.

One maid alone on her to wait,
Whom princes, stooping from their state,
Would serve on bended knee, and take
No payment, for the pleasure's sake.
Hear one sweet word, one smile behold,
To them were more than if they sold
Their service for a kingdom's gold.
Smiles now unto that face are strange,
Where thought on thought treads, pressing on
 In melancholy range.
But now and then the eye that shone
 Of old so mildly, glares with light,
 As bursts a meteor on the night
In one short angry flash, then dies
Into the quiet of the skies.

And after some preluding chords
 ('Tis her own melody and words),

Her song rings out upon the gloom.

How sadly is it echoed there,

And strangely, on the sullen air

Of that cold music-room !

Waiting till the clouds be scatter'd, and the sun have
leave to shine ;

Waiting till the grapes, sour-clust'ring, ripen into
ruby wine ;

Waiting till the harvest yellow in the lowly-bending
grain,

Or the face of Nature brighten after weeping tears in
rain.

Waiting until health returning paint the cheek and
fill the frame ;

Waiting until new-born feeling kindle a neglected
flame ;

Waiting for the dawn of daylight, for the opening of
the flower ;

Waiting till the well-known footstep sound on the
appointed hour.

Ah! such waitings are not grievous if the spirit speaks
within

That the shadows shall be broken, that the die we cast
shall win ;

That the winter, dark and heavy, shall be shaken from
the year,

And the birds reseek the branches, and the sky once
more be clear.

If we have a certain vision that the better time shall
come,

When the look we love shall see us, and the voice no
more be dumb ;

And the watching be requited, and the prayer obtain
its suit,

And the seed which Nature planted shall be fostered
into fruit.

But how weary is the waiting when, like blinded men,
we grope,

Stumbling o'er the wrecks of Pleasure in a path unlit
by Hope ;

Risking ever, never winning—doomed to lose and not
to find—

'Tis a wrenching of the heart-strings, and a palsy of
the mind.

Waiting for the tread that sounds not till the very
sense grows weak,

Knowing that the search is hopeless—yet we cannot
cease to seek ;

Yearning for forgetful quiet, yet ordained to watch
and wait,

Like a spirit thrust from Eden at a never-opening gate.

Waiting ! O, 'tis weary waiting, crouching in the shades
of life ;

When the eye is shut from seeing, and the hand is tied
from strife ;

When no change comes fraught with colour, where
excitement hath no part ;

O, this weary, weary waiting is the file that bites the
heart !

She stops, with only the maid's sobs to stir

The silence—'twas not so in earlier youth ;

Then palace-halls were redolent for her

With incense of a flattery that was truth.

Silent her face too : nothing now can wake

The spirit of those looks where erst expression spake.

Her soul seems absent, walking o'er
The past dark paths of life once more.
She thinks of how in earlier days
Husbands and crowns before her gaze
Were pass'd in an unmeaning show,
Like flies be-winged with fire that glow
 Upon the night of eastern lands,
Which children chase to make their prize,
And which delight the greedy eyes
 Yet do not reach the hands.

But Arabella never sighed
For thrones which man and fate denied—
Not these she sought; but was it meet,
 Because a monarch feared—indeed
 His fears were just—that she might breed
An offspring worthier of his seat,—
 A son unborn, that all the joys
Which Nature urges and man tries
To hallow by perpetual ties,

And vowed obedience, should be showered

On unshod girls, and rustic boys,

And barr'd to one so richly dowered ?

That ne'er should come within her reach

That interchange of household speech

Which binds two beings each to each ;

The language read by love, that lies

In blush and smile on brow and cheek ;

The wish that's gathered from the eyes

Before the lips can speak ?

Forbid, kind Heav'n ! that this should be ;

And so, convoyed by love, she found

A youth who stood on vantage-ground

Of king-descended ancestry.

And more than that, whose form and face,

In their own excellence, would grace

A line of monarchs or of clowns ;

For men who are the heirs of crowns,

In natural beauty o'er the rest
Are not prerogatively blest.

And stealing forth she 'scaped the watch
Placed on herself by royal fears,
And broke the harder bondage set
Upon the natural thoughts of years ;
And met him — 'twas not far to go—
When he and she alone—but no—
O, not alone, if two who loved could make
Worlds of each other, for the loving's sake ;
Yet not alone, if heavenly spirits bent
Their flight from other worlds to give in this
Unspoken blessing to the rites
Fashioned to raise two mortals to a bliss
Nearest their own in their high element,
The two by symbol and by word
In indissolvable accord

Were joined, and she forgot her fears,
And chid her sighs and checked her tears,
Forgetting all, and all forgiving,
The griefs and wrongs of her past living,
As formed for more expansive life
The maiden grew into the wife.

So both—and who can say which most?—
Lived in a maze of rapture lost,
Lived for a season—'twas no more.
“Too bright to last!”—sad words, before
How often said, how often felt,
Of suns that shine and hearts that melt
With light and longing, till they rest
Beneath the ever-nearing West.
They two spoke not the words, yet fear
Foreknew the shadows deepening near.
Then why thus madly rush to meet
The danger yawning at their feet?

Why sink into the soft estate
Of joy so brief, defying fate ?
Go, ask the lightning why, mid crashes
Of thunder following as it flies,
It for one measureless moment flashes,
Then sinks extinguished in the skies.
The flash is glorious, though it prove
Precursor of a deeper night ;
So mortals gauge the worth of love
By its intensity of light.

Soon well-paid ears were listening,
And eyes had seen what they had done ;
And which, when uttered, caused a king
To tremble on an ungraced throne.

O Power ! O strangeness of command !
When one, the ruler of a land,
Born for authority more than love,
To change or crush, but not improve ;

With tawdry mind, and timid breast,
More weak and wanting than the rest—
Than half at least of those he rules,
Not risen to fiends, or sunk to fools ;
Can cry out “Hear, and go and do !”
 And thousands hear, and bow, and long
To be the foremost of the crew,
 And work the delegated wrong.

The wrong was this :—The pair were seized
 By royal myrmidons, who forced
 Seymour, from light and love divorced,
To the Tower’s river-cinctured hold,
To be released when Hatred pleased,
 And Cowardice grew bold.

And Arabella was close pent
 Beneath a private roof, and there
 Left weeping that she could not share
Her husband’s hard imprisonment.

All speech, all intercourse—more hard
Made thus to both—between them barr'd.
Suppose the case, O man! O woman!—you
Who love and live, one single life for two—
Whose looks engender liking each for each,
When lips have souls, and eyes are bright with speech,
Whose love gives beauty to the looks which none—
Not even *she*, had at her ocean-birth,
The far-sung Aphrodite, nor the Sun
Incarnate in a man to fire the hearts of Earth.

And then the small civilities
Seen ever through enlarging eyes;
The simple words to which there springs
The answering heart; the little gifts
Which passion for the giver lifts
Above the broad largesse of kings;
All these they had—all these, alas!
They have not;—yet it came to pass

That the young husband found the power
By vulgar means, or by the show
Of his most great and wordless woe,
To bribe the jailor of that Tower—
The cage through century-laden time
Of criminals who knew no crime.

So Seymour, watched and guarded well,
Went up the dark'ning river, fearing
Each time might be the last, to see
The one he loved to see, and tell
The love so often told which she
Heard often, never tired of hearing.
Yet neither when they met was free
To revel in a simple bliss :
The thought what time to come might be
Corrupted half the sweets of this.
They feared lest prying eyes might view
And tongues disclose their natural guilt ;
And in that mighty fear they built

Their hopes up higher, bolder-breasted,
And strung themselves a deed to do
That agony of love suggested.

“Alas!” she cried one night—“alas!
That thou by stealth shouldst come and pass,
As if thou wert a thief to shun
The light of day—man’s sight and touch!
Ah me! what evil hast thou done,
Unless the loving me be such?
’Tis hard, this fear that we, who know
We do what law and nature bid,
Should be *found out*, as ’twere, and chid
And chastened, both—and wherefore so?”

Then he: “It shall no longer be;
We suffer, and we must be free.
Release from chains!—the wrongly bound
Should find it, and it shall be found.”

“What!” she exclaimed, with quickened breath—

“What, Seymour, wouldst thou counsel death?

No other means can I divine.”

“A gentler way, sweet wife of mine;”

He answered, smiling. “Death would suit

The plans of others, not our own;

We must escape! A separate route

Will take us to a point foreknown.

We part but once, dear love, at starting,

And meet for aye, for no more parting.”

“Escape!” she cried. “What magic power

Could loose thee from that moated tower?

And I, a woman, to evade

My vigilant guards! Ah! less afraid

I should be to face death than dare

A risk so great, which thou must share!

The thought appals!” Then he: “We run

No greater risk than we have done,

And, doing as we do, do now.

Thou couldst not live without me ? Thou !”

“ No, no !” she cried. Then he : “ How sweet
These meetings ! Could we cease to meet ?
And, meeting thus, be sure some friend
Will turn informer in the end ;
Then shall we find less means for flight—
Far less than those I have in sight.
What worse can chance us than a grave
Dug by th’ attempt ?—and thou canst brave
This last result. But if kind fate

Should grant success, my own, my life !
O ! what would that not compensate ?

Think calmly first, my wedded wife,
Before thou answerest ?” Slowly she
Replied : “ I will dare all for thee !
Act thou, and venture, and prepare ;
A woman’s courage is to bear.
Lead on in all that fits the man,
I follow as my weakness can.”

Then did they plot, if that could be
 When he was all device and speech,
 Employed to strengthen and to teach,
And show the blest results ; and she
All promise, somewhat dashed by fears,
And confidence that shone through tears.

And Seymour fled—how glad to fly
 From that strong tyrannous Tower ! Much need
 There was of patience, time, and heed,
And gold-dust sprinkled lavishly
 In watchful eyes, and failure too,
 And plots and plans devised anew,
In better time and altered shape,
Ere such a prisoner could escape
From such a prison ; but at last
He saw it disappearing fast
Upon his anxious view, and then
 When all its turret-tops away
 Had died in ev'ning's gathering grey,
He felt himself a man 'mid men.

Away! no time for sleep or rest
With such a spur within his breast
As Hope and Memory both supplied,
The bitter past, the future chance ;
By boat, on horse, to row and ride—
Away! The morning's earliest glance
Will wake a fierce and villanous pack
To bark and follow on the track ;
Hired to pursue whatever flies,
When he who feeds them slips the ties.
Behold him rushing on—away!
With the last look of dying day.
Through wet and dry, o'er plain and hill,
The midnight hears him thundering still ;
And the dull hours 'twixt gloom and shine,
When revellers sleep away their wine,
And Labour hath not left his bed,
Are scared by that quick passing tread.

And lo! the day is born—the day
That rises, whether foul or clear;
Too unconcerned with man to pay
Respect to human smile or tear:
Yet such a day, all days beyond
For trembling Love; for on its wings
In flight from East to West it brings
His freedom, or a closer bond.

Hark! the alarm from the dusky tower
Rings out, and awakens the tools of Power.
There's a throng in its courts, and the sharp air sounds
With the voices of men, like the bay of hounds.
Fiery in hurry, and fierce in mind,
With curses on him whom they fly to find,
They are off—and Silence is left behind.

On, Seymour! If thou spare thy steed
In mercy, there are those in chase
Whose merciless fangs, when won the race,
Will make thy very heart to bleed.

Ha! bravely ridden! and now the breeze

Blows feebly from the wished-for sea;—

'Tis the first breath of liberty.

One hour more, and no need to urge

His worn steed; what he seeks he sees,

And he draws rein upon the pebbly verge

Of ocean, and can hear the ceaseless surge

Of its green depths, and sees its boundless breast

Heave with an irrepressible unrest,

Its billows singing as they mount: 'The slaves

Of man are men—God only binds the waves.'

He cast his loving eyes around

To find the treasure, which, when found,

Were greater than e'er blest the hands

Of miners in their golden sands;

And in the offing, 'gainst the sky,

Large-limb'd, he saw a French ship lie,

With ready crew and wing-like sail

Distended to the western gale.

"*She* must be there!" he cried;—the thought

Was fever to his haste. He sought

And quickly found a boat, and plied

The foaming oars, and up the side

Of the tall ship, with clamb'ring feet,

Gaining the deck, he sprang to greet

His faithful wife, and each and all

Were startled by his passionate call

On his one love. Alas! the name

Was strange, and then the answer came

From careless lips; but like a dart

Thrown at him to transfix his heart:

"No woman here! our hours are numbered

For work; 'tis better when time presses

Not to be worried or encumbered

By female tongues and female dresses."

O love! O fate!—What best? O say,

Shall he fly? Whither fly?—or stay?

What think? And she—ah! where is she?

Past onward where her steps are free,

Or in the land whose shores enclose

For every friend a thousand foes?

No trace—no guess—with troubled heart

And mind toss'd as the waves, he found

A vessel straining for the start;

And when the second day came round,

He trod alone the Flemish coast

With freedom won, and all beside it lost.

The misty coast was disappearing fast

On Seymour's vision, gazing to the last,

When, as it seemed, with body worn and mind

Fluttering in haste to leave some fear behind,

Two cavaliers reached Lee by boat: the one

Smaller in size, but first in rank, had on

A manly doublet coarse; large French-like hose

Adorned his legs; in cumbrous guise the clothes

A mark for every shaft alike
Where not an arrow fails to strike ;
Allowed my life, and yet no more

Allowed the love that makes its all !
To shore ! put back, ye men, to shore !

With Seymour I would fly or fall !
Ye will not, cold and savage crew ?
Love never wore a smile for you !
Then on, if such must be my fate ;
On, quicker than a monarch's hate !
He is before ! Will join me !—No !

That day on me will never shine ;
Hope is a flower that cannot grow
From such a barren past as mine !”

Then did she cease from lack of strength,

And yet her future grew in light,
As o'er the sandy waves at length

The spires of Calais rose to sight ;



And distant bells sent forth their voices,
As when a populous town rejoices.
She, even she, forgot the past,
And dreamt a change might come at last.
Again she trod the green resorts,
Far from the blare and blaze of courts,
Which Fancy spread before her view,
And wore away the easy hours
'Mid scenes which Nature robed in flowers,
And jewelled with the dew.
She saw—to her what sight more dear ?
A visionary husband near.
She heard—what sound to her more sweet ?
The pattering of her children's feet ;
And hoped—away with hope, away !
Hope lives by night, but dies with the undreaming day.

What thing there through the salt haze looms
Betwixt her vessel and the shore ?
No spirit from the dead men's tombs
Could scare the eye of mortal more.

Large and more large it grows and clearer,
And guns boom from the deck, now nearer,
Of an armed ship, that o'er the sea

Comes swooping with its high-beaked head,
And England's regal flag unfurled ;
And cruel as a fiend—as he,

The primal Devil who misled
The woman who was half the world—
Its chief prey she who saw the town,

And dreamt of bliss. O Power, above
The law of nature!—stricken down
With freedom's blessing half secured,
And worse—how worse to be endured,
When half in reach of love.

Ah ! Arabella, better find
Reception from the unpersecuting wave,
Than seek it from thy kind ;
Alas ! they only save

To torture ere they strike. Poor hapless thing !
The ocean were more speedy and more just ;
It kills and lies not—rather this than trust
A kinsman and a king !

No pity, no release: the hand
Of tyranny was roughly laid
On its fair victim, who was made
To tread again that hated land,
And, locked in its old Tower, renew
The sight of grief half-hidden from view.

“ Four years ; an unoffending bird,
Shut in so cold a cage ! ” she cries :
“ O surely God, who hath not heard
My prayers, must love mine enemies ;

That God who gives them hearts so bold

To do this harm on me now done,

Who makes their feet so swift to run,

And hands so strong to hold,

Wronged by a king and queen!—indeed

The regal woman could enforce

Respect from those she made to bleed.

Vain was she ; yet with nerves as coarse

And strongly drawn as man's, and mind

Licentious in its queenly kind,

Which yet could brace its spirit tightly

To rule a turbulent land uprightly,

And too, at times, what asks for art

More rare, the passions of her heart.

Heaven help her ! Dead, she left a name

For private flaws and public fame

Composed of glory and of shame.

But he, the man whose sex should be

More great, is smaller-souled than she ;

And with such doubtful qualities born,

As might a pedant's chair adorn,

But on a throne, with power to wreak
His will, are mischievous or weak,
Weak toward the men of strength, but strong
To load the weak like me with wrong."

And here the waiting-woman, stung
By anger, charged with clatt'ring tongue :
" He fill a throne, that man of all
The men that live ! A huckster's stall
Would suit him best : there daily placed
He'd find employment to his taste.
To gather pennies year by year
In selling cheap provisions dear,
Would fit his mental range ;
He's shrewd enough to bargain there
With squabbling housewives for his ware,
And cheat them in the change.
Out on such king-ship ! He a king !
A misbegotten clumsy thing ;

A poor sham king, like one of those
Which players do in borrowed clothes,
The ill-paid parodists of power,
With paint and tinsel of an hour.
A warrior who talks loud—and flies ;
A statesman who speaks less—and lies ;
Blest with the crown his birthright gave,
But meant by Nature for a slave.
Had I my choice——”

Here, as if seeming
To waken up from some half-dreaming,
Poor Arabella cut the thread
Of the maid's sharp discourse, and said :
“Nay, Madeline, nay—rail not at them
To whom Heav'n grants a diadem,
However badly it may sit
Upon the head it fails to fit.
If I may find some reason good
For what I speak in wrathful mood,

'Tis in the woe, the long despair
Of better times that hath so wrench'd
The strings of this weak brain, and quenched
The little light that once was there.
Heaven pardon me! How many more
Better than I have borne before
What I now bear? Say, what am I
To her who lost her youthful head
Upon the bloody greensward nigh?
Incarnate worth and wisdom bled,
When she, whose momentary crown
Held death within, was stricken down.
All that an angel could present
Of piety and beauty, blent
Its charms in her, and all that age
Heaps up to make a mortal sage.

“ And I have thought myself to take
My life, oft, for the sorrow's sake.
And then a face looked down, divine
In might and meekness, into mine.

And I heard, while ineffably
Love lay in the reproachful eye,
'What have I done, what borne for thee—
 The ruler's hate, the jeering throng,
 The plaited thorns, the shameful thong,
And horror of th' accursed tree;
And yet *thou* canst not bear awhile
 The wrongs of those I died to save;
 Let them repent!' And then he gave
A smile—a sweet and wondrous smile—
Which said that if they would be whole
Of all their maladies of soul,
And fall and touch his garment's hem,
There might be mercy e'en for them."

Then she began, in absent tone,
Singing a song, as if her brain
Was listening to another's strain,
While her lips sang her own.

“ Ambition hath a life to give
Of power and daily-fed renown,
And star and coronet and crown,
But this hath small delight—and why?
Honour must die.

And Pleasure hath a life to give
Of crowded halls and love and wine,
And sounds that charm, and gems that shine.
But this hath small delight—and why?
Pleasure must die.

And Learning hath a life to give
Of Wisdom culled from every clime,
And all the treasured thought of Time.
But this hath small delight—and why?
Knowledge must die.

And Christ, too, hath a life to give
Of supersensual joy, that lies
In an eternal Paradise.
Be this my chos'n delight— and why?
This will not die.”

Thus sang she what she liked with liking fonder

Than aught beside—the Heaven above.

And yet her unstaïd thoughts would wander

To the low earth she had no cause to love.

“O mistress dear!” poor Madeline said,

Or rather sobbed—and, weeping, turned her head.

Then she, as musing: “Hear my dream:

They sometimes are the things they seem.

A man approached me in the guise

Of noble birth, with brow austere,

And fixed me with ambitious eyes,

And holding forth a crown, ‘Behold,’

He cried, ‘this rim of magic gold!

Take it and wear it. Wherefore fear?

Two mighty nations shall obey

Thy rule, and thou be great as they.’

“And then a child of mine—a child!

Have I a son? My thoughts are wild.

Came near, a noble little thing

That reproduced my lord, and borrowed

Its bloom from me before I sorrowed

So often that it all took wing.

It held a flower-wreath, bright with dew,

Itself had woven from the spring,

And cried with earnest meaning, 'Choose

Between the crown and this ; refuse

The one, thou canst not wear the two !'

With what delight—what need to tell

The crown I chose ?—that coronet

Of natural gems. My eyes were wet

With grateful tears, and as they fell

Upon the leaves, my heart's blood stopt

To see them blight where'er they dropt.

'Tis thus some fatal magic still

Turns all my little good to ill.

Hence, ye detested crowns !—away !

I would ye not ! But say—ah ! say,

Why, that another's days may shine,

Is light for ever shut from mine ?

My heart!—my husband! By God's grace,
Shall I —when shall I quit this hateful place?"

When thy tears shall cease from raining,
And thy voice from its complaining;
When thy heart shall cease from beating
For thy own or others' grief,
Shalt thou find relief;
When thy voice shall cease repeating,
"When—O when?"
And in long procession go
Sable horse and silent men
In the paid pretence of woe.
Unveil the future. See the funeral train,
Slow pacing hearse and nodding plume;
The glories of the dead. Ah! wouldst not thou
Have changed them for one hour of living peace?
Peace to thee now!
Peace in the tomb!

Enter where those illustrious in decease
Are laid in honour—'tis thine own.
Its shrines and aisles the western abbey spreads,
A forest interlaced in stone.
Its pillars bear on their unbending heads
The weight of ages. Lo! the vaulted space
Where she of thy own race,
A Queen discrowned, a Queen beheaded lies,
There take thy first repose!
Even a monarch cannot bid thee rise
To be fresh-tortured. Thy best obsequies
Are some few natural tears which those,
Thy friends, shed o'er thy virtues and thy woes,
With whispered doubts and sidelong fear,
For vengeance is alive, and things that live may hear.

Enough! Death comes to all. If future hours
Will bring their thorns, the present hath its flowers.
Then change the scene. Unbar you palace gates,
Hearts, there, are small, though men are great.

Because a woman hath been buried nigh,

Must joy, too, die?

Leave her to her narrow tomb,

And enter thou that glittering room.

Joy lives therein to love, and drink, and sing ;

To tread and to retread the ring

Of riot, on the floor where sport

The gilded satellites of Court,

And flush the craven spirit of a king.

LORD COBHAM.

(*TEMP.* HENRY V.)



PHILIP HOWARD, EARL OF
ARUNDEL.

(*TEMP.* ELIZABETH.)

LORD COBHAM.

(*TEMP. HENRY V.*)

PHILIP HOWARD, EARL OF
ARUNDEL.

(*TEMP. ELIZABETH.*)

LITTLE hath Poet here to tell
Of story, but before men's eyes
To set, as best he may devise,
Two scenes—would they were pondered well
By him who, whether sage or fool,
May boast the awful power to rule.
The thought on which these visions turn
Is one of pregnant consequence,
Which all may grasp with little sense,—
None are too old to learn.

Then let us live in the far days
Of the fifth Henry. Fix your gaze
Upon a prisoner, in a room,
 Made, and no more, to guard and keep ;
 Where beds are not composed for sleep,
And windows manufacture gloom.

 A noble languished in the Tower.
Of course, in the large eyes of Power,
He had done wrong ; but in his own
 Being guiltless, took the liberty
 To mark his sense of right and fly.
Then high rewards, his flight being known,
Were offered to whoe'er would track
The truant lord, and bring him back ;
But vainly. For four blessed years
 Safely he walked, and freely thought,
 And in that period plotted naught
Against the State to rouse its fears,

Nor wronged a single man, to draw
Upon his head the avenging law.

One spiteful day—'twas near to Wales ;
O'er breezy hills, through peaceful vales
He roamed, and cried, " How rich is he
To whom this spacious scene is free
For daily use. Why bow and bend
At courts, when Nature is his friend,
And only changes her delights
And not her favours—rest by nights
And healthy toil ?" Thus far he said,
A grasp upon his shoulder laid
He turned, and in th' aggressor's face
He saw confinement and disgrace
Written for himself, with death to close
The vista of his earthly woes.

So view him now restored to dwell,
Close-guarded, in his hopeless cell ;

Brave, virtuous, what is that to them
Who hate his faith, and seek to stem
The course of thought—when not the same
With theirs—by famine, chains, and flame ?
In due time, in the sullen dawn
Of a damp daylight, he is drawn
To a new spot—small comfort yields
That change of scene—St. Giles's Fields.
A chain about his middle bound,
They swing him upward from the ground,
Then light a fire—say, can they tell
How fiercely such shall glow in hell ?—
Beneath him, that the mounting heat
May sear his face, and singe his feet,
Till higher, broader grown, it wraps
His whole frame in a smoky shroud,
And many a pitiless flame-tongue laps
The juice of life, and crackles loud.
Enough ! The work is finished. Can
That charred mass have been once a man ?

Why treated thus ? List ye the cause
Who work the engine of the laws.
He would not, of men's threats afraid,
Adore the bread some baker made,
When the priest's word, like Moses' rod,
Changed portions of a loaf to God.
He would not grant, in many a clime
There might be met with, at one time,
Ten thousand bits, which some would call
Mere bread, but were not bread at all,
By human hands profanely sliced,
But each an individual Christ.
He scorned to reverence skull or bone,
Though part of a saint's skeleton.
Nor in a living man could see—
Weak, bad, or mad—the right to be
A substitute for Deity.

“Forgive them, Father !” ere he died
From their rough handling, Cobham cried.

And he had fled ere now, to be
In body and in spirit free,
But, on the coast of Sussex seized,
His pious persecutors pleased
To put him in this place of grief,
For rightly holding wrong belief.
And what denies he?—the same things

Which hurried Cobham to the stake ;
So great in the pure eyes of kings

The change instructive years may make.
Faith grew, not love, in times between
King Henry and the maiden Queen.

A charge, too, rests upon his head
Of fostering hopes to mount the bed
Of Scottish Mary ; yet if this

Were true, why did Elizabeth
Engage with her imperial breath
To give him her fair hand to kiss,

In sign of grace regained, and all
 His lost restored, if he would fall
 Down at her feet, and at her bid
 Swear not to think the things he did ?

'Twas proved—no more—his early home
 Had sought him, and he turned to Rome.
 “But,” some may interpose, “if not
 Proved guilty, yet the frequent plot ;
 The means, unscrupulous as the ends,
 Devised by Mary and her friends,
 And widely talked of, made him known
 As one who *might* subvert a throne ;
 And so state-reasoners deemed it wrong
 To build on chance, or risk delay,
 And solved a problem, which was long
 And difficult, in their own rough way.”

It may be—yet the way *was* rough ;
 And though the Queen had ground enough

To shut him up, she scarce could hope,
By tempting him to curse the Pope
He loved in spirit, and to save
 His lands and liberty, forsake
 His soul's allegiance, thus to make
A trusty subject of a knave.

His wife, his children, pray for grace
To see the father's, husband's face.
One child had never blest his sight,
 Born since they shut his prison-door.
Then seek the Queen. Demand no right.
 Ask mercy ; beg, beseech, implore !
Attack the woman in her breast.
'Tis vain—let History tell the rest.
 He will not re-believe ?—the curse
Of Heav'n is on him. Treat him worse !
Fine, chain him, starve him. Run the range
Of outrage ; yet will he not change ?

Relent not—give the system scope
 And time to work. Feed him with hope,
 But keep him to his jail, no more
 To leave till Death knocks at the door.

What is Belief? Unmanned by pain,
 If one should swear that night is day,
 Or says whate'er his jailors say,
 Is that consent of heart or brain?
 Or is it that Power strives to set
 Its foot upon unpleasant creeds
 Which living men may fear to hold,
 And so in ages unborn yet
 They may die out, like fire that needs
 Some stirring that it grow not cold?
 But what becomes of faith on force
 Thus founded? From a bitter source
 Can sweet and healing streams arise?
 What soul hath that belief which cries,

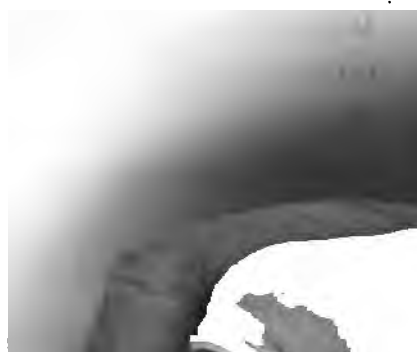
“Leave me to rest in peace. Thy will
Shall be my will ; and thou alone
Shalt make my thoughts : though vile and dim,
I’ll call them clear and good, until
A stronger oust thee from thy throne,
And then I’ll think with him ?”
What need of books ? What need to know ?
What need of hearts to feel ? For lo !
In place of arguments and facts,
The torturing chain, and blood-red axe !
Where prisons teach theology,
And preachers shout, “ Believe or die !”
Bequeathing to a future race
This doctrine of the Tower,
That Power is Knowledge, in the place
Of Knowledge being Power.

EARL OF SURREY

EARL OF SURREY.



IF in the clash of mimic fight,
Upon the tourney's cruel field,
Where floating dust half-veiled from sight
The broken spear, the battered shield,
And horse and rider senseless laid
In the rough game our fathers played,
The bravest knights who longed to close
In conflict with less noble foes,
Swerved from their headlong course in fear
To meet the shock of Surrey's spear ;



If, foremost 'mid his fellow men,
 He raised his laurel-shaded brow,
And this advantaged Surrey then,
 What doth it profit Surrey now?


Though on his father's battle-plain,
 Where spear-thrusts were no longer blunt,
The Howard blood within his veins
 Compelled Earl Surrey to the front,
He cannot give a draft on Fame
In quittance of his present shame.
Brave, courteous, he could rage or melt
 In war or love, and won the prize,
When his lips sang the pains he felt—
 The tyranny of Beauty's eyes.
For man will rather wear the chains,
Life-forged, so oft where woman reigns,
Than for one instant suffer those
Which despots of his sex impose.

Shut in this Tower he cannot move
In fight, and loses heart for love.
A rival's heavy purse could win
False witness his own home within,
And money made the charges clear
Which seized his goods, and sent him here !

Here !—Would his better lot were cast
In Florence, as in days now past,
When on his helmet's top he wore
The challenge-glove of Geraldine,
His vaunted love, his chosen Queen ;
And knight and steed went down before
That onset, as Lord Surrey spurr'd,
'Mid sounding trump and urging shout,
In hope which past renown held out,
And strength which present love conferred.
That lance, as rival ranks confessed,
Was never idly placed in rest.
Defeat ne'er lowered that haughty crest.

First soldier in the listed field,
He bore away a golden shield
Which the Duke gave him, as the meed
Of graceful act and doughty deed.
O Surrey! had the Spartan's doom
 Been thine, and on it thou hadst been
Borne by thy comrades to the tomb,
 Wept by the world and Geraldine,
Thou wouldst have felt the fall in war—
 The death by some fair-striking foe
With stronger arm—less grievous far
 Than that thy noble blood should flow
Like some marauding beast's that long
Had worked the hen-roost nightly wrong,
But, caught, is hanged with blow and jest,
That fowls may live and farmers rest.

In this depressing Tower, in vain
Would Surrey tax his wealthy brain,



To pour, as was his wont to do,
The rhymes that answered to his flame,
And ever as his passion grew
More fast and fanciful they came.
The lyre that sang the lover's bliss
Of being tortured, rang like this.

Oh! who to novel phrase could shape
The stale encomia of the grape,
And sing of men inspired by wine—
The clay which drinking makes divine,
Yet fondly deem his lyre could ring
With other than an ancient string?

The bow may shoot an oft-shot shaft,
The statesman may repeat his craft,
The miser search and search for gold,
And books on books make students old,
But weak and wearying were the rhyme
That told of these the thousandth time.


And though the lover fume and fret
For charms he fancies matchless yet,

And, warm with unaffected fire,
Exhaust the phrases of desire,
Fair looks are found by him who wills,
And passion's older than the hills.

Still, still with me can Love prevail
To make me tell an oft-told tale.
I speak, perforce, of what I feel,
A wound I scarcely wish to heal ;
Words, like wine brimming from a cup,
Come from my surcharged bosom up.

Yet might I urge excuse, and say,
" Go ! view the reason for my lay,
And when your wondering eyes have seen
So fair a world in Geraldine,
Absolve me of my talk, and blame
The charms that light a larger flame."

But, wrong or right, it matters not ;
Fixed is my fate, and stern my lot ;
Enchained in mind, bewitched in heart,
I play an incoherent part—
Say what I would not say—condemn
What lovers do, then act with them.



I would be cold, and tamely burn.
I fly—how short a way—and turn.
'Mid smiling crowds I walk forlorn,
And hug the slavery I scorn.
I mourn how high my folly flies,
Yet would not for the world be wise.

But now, approach him, sitting there
Dejected in that broken chair,
Whose legless corner 'gainst a wall
Is propp'd, significant of fall—
The fall that unto dust hath lowered,
And death, the gallant house of Howard.
He thinks of all that was his own

In days when, fired by present bliss,
Hope drew more largely on the unknown—
To end in such a scene as this!

Go near—he writes. Write what he will,
His fate will colour it perforce,

As the soil modifies a rill

To touch its state or change its course.

His thoughts are other than they were ;

His pen is servant to his brain ;

Go nearer—read what's written there,

Couched in the new poetic strain,

Which he first brought from far, men say,

And added to our English lay—

The verse that freely flows along,

And moves its feet in rhymeless song.



Why am I thus ? What crime hath sent me here ?

This durance—I have not upon myself

Myself imposed it. If the will could wait

Upon the wish for orders, I would step

From out this low imprisonment, and raise

My head 'mid freemen—thus far pure of blame.

How many, by their own deed, sell their souls

To a captivity outfacing mine !

Misellus was the self-bound slave of gold,
Engrossed by that sole passion where success
Doth not enjoy its object. The thief filches
The purse he covets, to employ its store
In the exhaustive process of debauch.
And if the lover hearkens when young lips
Breathe the faint "Yes!" say, doth he stand far off
In mild regard, nor use the means by which
He's summoned to a dearer intimacy?
But, prisoned in his mind by the strong lust
Of what was useless all, Misellus lived.
He sighed for comforts, dared not pay for them.
He loved society, but shrank to ask
His friends to come and eat and drink his gold.
He clung to earth, but summing up the cost
Of probable cure when ill, preferred the risk,
And lost his life, but saved his silver. Death
And Life to him had but small difference.
He was thought rich when living; when the dust
Was shovelled o'er him, he was known to be so.

Amander was the fool of an idea.
He deemed that all earth's separate excellence

Was centralized in one created thing.
He saw no sun but in two lustrous eyes ;
But in one voice could he hear melody.
He never rose to shake the manacles
From off his spirit, and which girt it round
From intercourse with broad humanity.
When this exacting Idol cast him off
For some new votary, Passion whispered him,
“ One flower in one small garden hath been plucked,
Therefore the World 's a desert. Canst thou live
To think those lips are press'd, but not by thee ?
That there are arms round that voluptuous form
Not thine ? Go, kill thyself ! ” And so he did.

Polites was a statesman. He, as seemed,
Made use of his own freedom to impose
Compulsion upon others. Being in power
He was a Lord, and cried out, “ Go ! ” and “ Do ! ”
And had a rod in waiting for refusal.
But, to command the many men, he bent
Subservient to the few. Into the shrine
Where Truth should dwell—(and only Truth makes
free)—

He thrust expediency ; and when he fell,
By fault or chance, what matters ?—but he fell,
And, falling, dragged his fetters down with him.
He saw another hold the reins he held,
Saw nothing else. His soul grew lean, and so
He waited at official doors which once
Flew open to his step, content to crouch
Where he commanded ; he could gather crumbs
Beneath the tables where he whilom sat
The governor of the feast. The rock was not
Less hard, because his own hands chained him there.
Hopeless he hoped ; and balked desire became
The vulture that devoured his useless life.

The Earth hath things of True and Right, which
taste

Sweeter than freedom lost or country banned
Lie bitter on the palate. Sparta saw
Chelonis seek her sire Cleombrotus,
When her own husband shook him from his seat.
She left th' ambitious partner of her bed :
For what to her was the reflected light
Of conjugal splendour, or the pomp of dress,

Or courtly suppliants, when Injustice dwelt
The neighbour of a throne? Far better share
Her father's flight, the exile or the chain,
Bondage and slandered name. He needed friends,
And she was those to him—his friend she was
When all the world which she had left could give
Of pride or pleasure asked her for his foe.

But time pass'd on, and when Leonidas—
The second of the name—reclutched the reins,
And drove her husband forth, she turned to him.
"Chelonis! daughter!" cried Leonidas;
"Why leave me now? Thou wentest with thy sire
When he could give thee nothing but a share
Of his own trouble—hunger and bad words,
And all the ills of the successful man.
Now that my fortune is o'er-brimmed with good
Dip in thy hand, and take thereout thy fill."
Then she: "Accursed of the Gods am I,
That both my husband and my sire refuse
To hear my prayers. Might seizes upon power,
And uses it as such a conquerer would.
I went with thee because thou wast oppress'd;

Thou art th' oppressor now—a prisoner he,
Or exile, thou a king. Can prisons shut
The light from conscience ? or can banishment
Exile the sense of sympathy ? I go
With these because they want what thou hast got.
Enjoy thy pleasures—here are mine !” she said ;
And lifting up one child, Cleombrotus
Leading the other by the hand, she left
The regal presence calmly, and with it
Ease, and repute, and many-sided power,
To welcome what the world calls misery.

As for myself—enough that I have lived
And laboured. What have I got out from life ?
Sore travail and vexed spirit ! Vanity !
Where vanity is these will not cease to be.
Tyrants and victims go to the same place.
Shut up a fool, if thus thou canst shut out
His folly from him. Still might I have chased
The phantom Love, but now these sober walls
Clasp me too tight for that. Yet have I loved,
And sung of love ; and had I not been barred
From following Fancy's lead o'er rotten ground,

I might have on the altar of my God
Placed Geraldine my idol——

And here the strain broke off, as 'twere
The time for writing verse had past,
And life, with hope and joy and care,
Was fading on his vision fast.
Half in another world he seemed
To stand, where two great confines kiss ;
So placed, no wonder if he deemed
'Twas folly to look back on this.

A plaintive letter, ere the end
Fell on him, noble Surrey penn'd,
And sent it to his judges. Send
To the wild waves to stop and hear,
And cry unto the rocks " Give ear ! "

And thus he wrote :—" If not to live
Be granted, yet let Mercy give
A reason for my death, though late—
The proofs that justify my fate ;
Dubbed traitor, confined in a jail,
I know the sum, I ask detail—
Tell me my faults. In pity make
My errors clear, for Christ's own sake,
Who loves the Godlike words that win
A dying sinner from his sin.
I will repent. I'll think it kind
In him who humbles heart and mind
To their own selves, nor needs abase
The body in this loathsome place.
If I have borne—that point I yield—
King Edward's arms upon my shield,
My fathers claimed the right of old
That right should to their heir belong ;
But if he hath been overbold,
I pray you pardon him the wrong.

THEORY

1. THEORY OF THE EXPERIMENT

The experiment is based on the following principles:

1. The principle of conservation of energy.

2. The principle of conservation of momentum.

3. The principle of conservation of angular momentum.

4. The principle of conservation of mass.

5. The principle of conservation of charge.

6. The principle of conservation of spin.

7. The principle of conservation of parity.

8. The principle of conservation of time reversal.

9. The principle of conservation of CPT.

10. The principle of conservation of CP.

LADY KATHERINE GREY.


LADY KATHERINE GREY.



HERE in some cell where light but shines
To stretch the torture of the day,
Misfortune marked with early lines
The meek pale face of Katherine Grey.
Gentle she surely was, and meek,
When Pembroke's son, by cruel wile,
Divorced her from his bed, to seek
In place of hers Queen Mary's smile ;
And the weak wife, in patience strong,
Could calmly bear so great a wrong.

Unfortunate, in truth, was she
Whose father on the scaffold died ;
 And whose own love in after-time—
A love by marriage sanctified,
And chosen when her heart was free
 To choose—was dealt with as a crime.
No wonder if her cheek grew pale,
And told the misery of her tale.


Much worth there must have been in her
 Who won Earl Hertford's love, and still
Could boast no brilliant charms to stir
 The passion and enslave the will,
And in whose mind small genius dwelt
To make its wit or wisdom felt.
'Twas, too, most perilous to love one
 Whose birth had set her near the throne ;
For love too oft, when once begun,
 Goes on to make its likings known,
And he who *here* should dare to wed,
Might win a wife, but lose a head.



The Queen, Elizabeth, besides,
Hated all bridegrooms and their brides ;
And nursed, in her imperious way,
A special hate for Katherine Grey.
Yet when mistakes and doubts arise,
And the sun shines not as it did,
'Tis best—so Hertford thought—to bid
The torch of Hymen light the skies.

The Queen is gone, with hawk and hound,
To hunt at Eltham's regal ground.
Down Whitehall Palace steps there steals
A woman, trembling as she treads ;
A veil, profusely spread, conceals
Her face and form, like one who dreads
Lest some unfriendly eye may view
The thing she longs, yet fears to do.
Love guides her safely where to go.
Smooth flows the course, the path is straight
That leads her to the water-gate
Of a tall house in Cannon Row.

She enters ; climbs the marble stair ;
A darkened room—one female there—
Her sister. Two men near her stand :
 In one a Lutheran priest is seen ;
 The second, he of noble mien,
Steps forth and takes her drooping hand.
Haste ! seal the irrevocable bond.
Quickly the fatal knot is tied,
And Katherine stands a happy bride—
Or should be now—why look beyond ?
 Yet to her thin lips vainly up
 Her sister holds the festal cup ;
She cannot taste, she scarcely dares
 To meet her husband's glowing eyes,
But hurriedly down the entrance-stairs
Returns like one who shuns surprise
In a wrong deed ; nor thinks to call
 Her life her own, until once more
 She sinks upon the sheltering floor
Of her own chamber at Whitehall.



Then stolen interviews, whose taste
Had bitter mingled with the sweet,
When joy, however great, to meet
Was dashed with fear, or checked by haste—
The haste and fear which should be known
To an unwedded love alone.
Theirs—which the Queen, not Heav'n, called wrong—
Could not, alas ! lie hidden long ;
For slanderous tongues at Court would speak
What courtly eyes were fain to see,
How Katherine changed from week to week,
And was as only wives should be.

Next to Elizabeth's ears there came
The news, and fury shook her frame.
“ *She dare to marry ! Let her live*
To learn what she hath done.” The rest
Was soon arranged. Like all who give
Annoyance to the royal breast,

She must in person compensate

For the imperial wrong—so let

Her boat pass through the Traitors' Gate,

Near where her greater sister met

A bloody death. Her weakness stirs

Some pity, surely?—Shut her fast

In the cold Tower, while he is cast

Within a dungeon far from hers.

So 'twas. No pity in that place

She met, nor out of it. In vain

She prayed and promised—ne'er again

Might Katherine see her husband's face.

The people cried out "Shame!" Small power

Had that to free them from the Tower.

The Plague came and slew many nigh,

But spared them in its cruelty.

They took them for a time away

In mercy! What did Katherine say?

“No charm hath life, unless I see
My child and husband, unto me.”
So wailed she, feeling what she said :
“Would, but for them, that I were dead !”

The Queen, magnanimously kind,
Took Hertford's gifts, and yet could fail
To free the giver from his jail,
Where both were retransferred, and pined
From year to weary year. At last,
When Katherine's life was ebbing fast,
They took her out, and let her lie
Until her time should come to die
In a friend's house. That time, 'twas clear
To all who saw her face, was near.
Slowly she sinks, and yet unvert
But by the wish to look on him.
Weak one day, weaker still the next,
A frail thing hanging o'er the brim

Of the great gulf wherein she longs
To plunge, unfollowed by her wrongs.

She asks that over her be read

The rites the Church prescribes for those

Whose war with life will shortly close.

Nay—read the Service for the Dead !

She faints ; the last thin colour flies

Her wasted face—not yet! The spark

Breaks out once more till all be dark ;

And with low tremulous voice, she cries,

“ Father of Christ—and mine! O take—

Take pity on me for *his* sake !”

Still doth her soul withhold its flight.

She lives through all the dreary night ;

And as the cold grey morning breaks,

From her last fitful sleep she wakes ;


Looks falsely strong, then bids them bring

Sir Owen Hopton to her side.

Two rings she gives him. The one ring
Marked the betrothed, one bless'd the bride :
“ These for my husband.” Then she hears
The passing-bell toll, and appears
Pleased with the sound, and feebly sighs,
“ 'Tis good so ! ”—listening till she dies.

When kings and queens shake off the coil
Of life, with regal tasks and toil,
Should Charity judge not as she
Judges uncrowned humanity ?
Elizabeth, when the hand of Death
Was pressing on the vent for breath,
Cried, “ I'll not have it : 'tis not meet
A rascal's son should fill *my* seat ! ”
Her spirit even then would fain
Have wreaked its hate on Katherine's son ;
If Heaven by such words can be won,
God writes, and preachers read in vain.

'Tis sad, too, what remains untold.
The husband of the dead grew old
In prison. When at length released,
The vigorous play of life had ceased ;
His health was sapped, his best years fled :
The courtier lived, the man was dead.
His soul was crushed ; the chords that rung
So sweetly once were now unstrung ;
The cup was drained, the voice was still—
And why ? It was a woman's will !
We fools may sigh that God should grant
To prison walls to do such things.
His purpose seems controlled by kings :
He sows, and man roots up the plant.



**THE NINTH
EARL OF NORTHUMBERLAND**

Whom Science by her charms had caught,

And taught them, willing to be taught.

The other two, as seemed, from birth

Had natures with a different bent,

And soared from the prosaic earth

Upon the wings the Muses lent.

And first the Earl his goblet filled

With red blood from the Gascon vine,

And some few drops propitious spilled

To great Agyieus and the Nine ;

Then smiling, cried, " Not unto me

This cell, though bare, can barren be,

When such as you around me sit

To wreath the time with flowers of wit.

Not only in these scenes we find

A pleasure for the cultured mind,

But converse with a friend can start

The nobler feelings of the heart."

Then Hues : " Among those feelings, best

In you is Charity express.



The patronage your bounty showers,
 My lord ! on merits mean as ours,
 Goes far beyond the world's, so slack
 To give, when getting nothing back."

"Nay !" cried the Earl ; " What search could fix
 In the account between us six
 The gain and loss ? What merit ought,
 My friends, on my side to be placed ?
 When in my cradle, knowing naught,
 Some fairy gifted me with taste.
 And as for wealth, I spend the store
 Which others heaped for me before.
 But say, could gold depress the scale
 Weighed 'gainst our Poets' latest tale ?
 Come, read or sing those strains of thine,
 That celebrate the birth of Wine."

The poet answered to the call ;
 Broad-bodied, and of stature tall,
 He was. A mason in the days
 Of early youth, he lived to raise

His fame up, built upon the base
Of a great mind. His comely face
Had somewhat lost its power to please,
Seared by inherited disease.
Much had he written in manly strain,
And graceful too ; and worked a brain
Which Genius fired and Learning fed
From its best stores—and thus he read.

THE BIRTH OF WINE.

In olden times ere men divined
The use of wine, a King of Persia strained
Some grape-juice into casks, which then consigned
To a deep vault therein untouched remained.
Time fled, and to a casual taste,
Seeming unpleasant, with unreasoning haste
He deemed it hurtful. Bottling some by way
Of farther trial on a leisure day
He left the bottles standing there,
But labelled largely "Poison!" and "Beware!"

One of his wives one night—'tis strange
 How many wives those Persians could endure,
 And change their loves, and love to change—
 Racked by a headache, sought to cure
 Her pains by suicide. She flew
 To where a bottle stood, then drew
 The guardian plug, and quaffed
 In desperate haste the deleterious draught.
 It tasted well for poison, and made death
 More easy to be suffered. She felt how
 It heated her quick-coming breath,
 And flushed the marble of her brow,
 And poured confusion through her brain ;
 And standing there, with reeling voice
 And swimming eyes, she cried, " O blessed choice !
 This may be death, but is not pain ;
 Again to live were sweet, could I so die again ! "


Then sinking down, soft slumber o'er her crept ;
 Hours struck, and kept on striking—still she slept,
 And slept, and slept till daylight broke,
 And then she woke—
 Woke with a start ; but ah ! what words can tell
 Her joy to know she lived, to feel that she was well.

Yet from that moment, more and more
Her health required her watchful care ;
And oft and oft she sought that secret store
To find recovery there.
'Twas sure to cure again what cured so well before.

This could not last : she could not taste
And not consume. In sadness she surveyed
The healing stuff, each visit that she paid,
And saw it waste and waste.
“ Ah me ! poor hopeless invalid ! ” she cried,
Drank the last bottle's last sweet drop, and sighed.

In time th' indignant Persian found
His precious juice was gone by stealth.
Then came his wife, and showed him how her health
Had been restored by means so sure yet mild ;
And though the angry monarch frowned,
The tender husband smiled.

Next did he order that new juice be poured
Into new bottles ; thus the poisonous hoard,
When the Shah called it “ wine,” became
The fashion with its royal name ;



And patriot courtiers, rank impelling rank,
Prest on to risk their lives, and nobly drank.

And all the Persian poets sang
This great discovery's praise,
The greatest one of ancient days ;
And loud and wide the chorus rose and rang :
" O Wine, sweet poison ! I would be
In danger evermore from thee ;
And if I die, and if I die,
My unrepenting lips shall cry,
' O Wine that killest ! thou dost give
A pleasure greater than to live.' "

Cried Warner : " A most spirited tale,
With a brave moral at the end ;
Such preaching should not surely fail
To win us. Here's your health, my friend !
Those Persians sang before they died
Like swans, but happier than the bird,
They died to live again, and plied
Their trade, and made their warblings heard."

"Nay," cried the second poet, "nay,
Some swans *do* sing, as travellers say.
The 'cygnus olor,'—let it come,
And live with man, *that* strikes it dumb;
But wild and free it tunes its throat
Unto a full articulate note,
And mostly, when some wound distains
Its plumage, pours lamenting strains.
E'en Chinese geese by right enjoy
The title of 'sweet-voiced' Lonskoi."

Then Hariot: "Wonders will not cease
While China boasts her singing geese.
The dying swan seems musical,
As making the best use of all
The little life that's left. But why
Should not mankind, when called to die,
Subside in a half-conscious swoon,
And lose existence in a tune?"

“Unlikely,” said the Earl, “I fear
 With men who have not voice or ear.
 But you infer, as I suppose,
 Whene’er man’s life on earth shall close,
 That he *has* lived it, nor lives on,
 No more immortal than the swan.”

“’Twould not be easy,” he replied,
 “To prove *them* living who have died.”

“But,” said the Earl, “may I be bold
 To beg the reasons for your creed?”
 “Somewhat too long as well as old,”

He answered; “and which I indeed
 Should be the last to use, and so
 Head back enjoyment in its flow.
 Best deck with converse, wine and song
 The hours that will not last too long.
 But this much I may say: we see
 Death ruling universally,
 But not to sight or other sense,
 A single resurrection thence.”

“ ’Tis not,” the elder poet said,
“ True that the harvest which Death gleams
Ne’er springs up from its burial-bed.
We oft *do* see a second birth
By Nature granted when she means
Such should be bodily and on earth.
A *spirit* surely may exist,
And not have power, howe’er it list,
To print in gross material guise
Its own fine self on mortal eyes.”

Cried Hues and Warner with one voice :
“ We’ll wait then till it hath the choice.”

“ That,” said the poet, “ to my view
Is a bad argument at best
For heirs of Euclid, men like you,
Whose proofs on unseen bases rest.
If there be *one* great Soul before
All time, there may be many more.

Now, what is space ? Search, 'twill be found

Without beginning, end, or bound ;

Still in itself a mere ideal,

And not a substance gross and real.

Yet to have been it hath possest—

Must have—a base on which to rest,

Eternal, infinite, and free

As was itself, and e'er shall be.

And what is this substratum ?—What

But the great Soul, in its own right

Existing without cause, and not

Infinity, but Infinite !

“Or thus. You sages will allow

That something at the least is now ;

And that, by all acknowledged laws,

That something had an earlier cause.

That cause had its own cause, and so,

Thinking and mounting as we go,

We reach the cause called Deity,
Which never did begin to be ;
Else, we concede a time in thought,
When there was absolutely nought,
And something made itself—and when
It made it, there was nothing then !”

“ Ye gods !” cried Warner, “ what a stream
Of metaphysics from the brain
Of a rapt poet ! Yet I deem
The lyre should sound a cheerier strain.
It might, my friend, be over-bold
To say your arguments are old ;
But words, when so compactly prest,
Will take some trouble to digest.
If my lord wills, the leech’s craft
Might help the process with a draft.”

The Earl smiled, passed the wine, and said :
“ You see, my bard ! these three are led

To follow suit, and take the view
Too many of their brethern do."

.

"This may be done," the bard replied,
"By men whose intellectual store
Is mathematics, and no more.
They set all evidence aside
Except their own. But if they rise
To higher flight, and analyze
The laws to which control is giv'n
O'er things on earth, and things in heav'n,
And strive to feel and count the links
Of matter in its mighty chain ;
Or stand, as 'twere, upon the brinks
Of distant worlds with seeing brain,
And spy their lineaments, and trace
Their order and their march in space ;
Then will they find that Truth may dwell
Outside the camp they love too well."

.

Then said the Earl : " Enough, my friend.
Turn we the talk. 'Twere wise to blend
Some lighter theme with the severe.
Resume our last discussion here ;
Or listen while our poet reads
The noble strains wherein he pleads
For his own art, and claims for *it*
More wealth of wisdom and of wit
Than Painter or Musician asks
From Nature for their grateful tasks."

The poet bent his weighty head
In mute acknowledgment, and read :—

" Rude and inflexible are the instruments
By which the Painter and the man whose soul
Is flooded with internal harmony,
Strive to beget in other minds what theirs
Conceive of Beauty. Beauty, in itself,
Is but the progeny of mental moods,
Which they, through process indirect, reveal
By exhibition of material signs.

The Poet straightly bares his mind, that all
 Who list may see it. Words are not to him
 More than the chariot which conveys one friend
 Into another's presence, whom he clasps,
 Sees, hears, and talks with, face to face unveiled.
 The other two are impotent to show
 Motion of life or thought, or fall or change.
 Cramped is the Painter's range ; one little space,
 One point of time, expression one and fixed,
 Bounds his dominion. Music to the soul
 Hath but its passage through the ear, and thence
 Issues in most sweet mutterings indistinct ;
 The language of some hazy oracle
 Which cannot be its own interpreter."

Cried Warner : " Pardon, if I check

The flow of so much eloquence

To say that rhyme would better deck

The naked thoughts, nor mar the sense.

" That," said the Earl, " we soon will test.

First, hear our Poet, and the rest

Of that which, warmed by genial fire,
He sings to celebrate his lyre ;
Next, how our second bard in rhyme
Hath clothed it : then will be the time
To pass your sentence, which is better,—
Verse rhyme-tied, or without the fetter.”

All giving their assent, again
The bard pursued his lofty strain.

“ Vast is the Poet’s range. Dumb matter speaks
With audible tongue when he doth question it.
He grasps the æry motions of the mind,
The forms of thought, the heav’n-spun elements
Of right and wrong, and offers them to man
For liberal usage. Wisdom hence may swell
Her precious store, and virtue grow in faith
To see her features so divinely drawn.
He in an instant can o’erstep the world,
And fetch and set before our eyes at once
The frozen North and its humanity ;
Then waves his magic wand, and lo ! there troop

Upon the stage the swarthy sons of Ind.
 He draws his fingers o'er the brow of youth,
 And furrows it with age ; shows Passion fanned
 To a small spark from the incipient gaze,
 Until it looks itself into a flame,
 Swelling to be the heart's incendiary.
 He makes his home in space ; bids Nature fetch
 His food from her illimitable fields ;
 Wisdom and Wit are his soul's ministrants ;
 All Life his company, and Time his slave."

Then, at the bidding of the Earl,
 The second Poet rose,
 And cried, " The setting of a pearl
 Is all my task ; like those
 Whose is the small but useful part
 To frame some work of glorious art."
 A young man, timid though sedate,
 Small-faced, and neatly clad
 He was, who did not overrate
 The merit that he had ;

And with a blush upon his cheek,
He read, in faltering tone,
Like one whose roses were not blown,
Whose name was yet to seek.

“ Up to the heav’n of high invention caught,
The Poet works, divinely taught ;
Dumb matter answereth him when he doth call.
He grasps the fleeting forms of thought,
The shades of right and wrong, and all
That melts the heart or moves the mind,
Then gives them to his kind
For liberal usage. Wisdom hence may swell
Her precious store, and Virtue wage
A firmer fight with ill, as on his page
She sees her features drawn so loveably and well.
He, ere the moment flies,
O’ersteps the world, and sets the frozen North
Before our wondering eyes ;
Then goes his edict forth,
And on the quick-changed scene, dark-skinned
And fickle-breasted troop the sons of Ind.

At his command, Youth, smiling now,
 Steps lightly on the stage ;
 He draws his fingers o'er its brow,
 And furrows it with instant age.
 Passion, first fanned to life, his pen portrays,
 Fanned by the primal gaze,
 Which looks and looks and looks again,
 Till the flame blinds the eyes, and spreads into the
 brain.

His home is universal space ;
 His food whatever Nature yields
 From her illimitable fields,
 And for his books he reads the human race.
 Bright-thoughted Wit, and Wisdom grave,
 Are his soul's ministrants, and Time his bounden slave."

Then Hariot cried : " For every man
 'Tis lawful—I in the same place
 Might do the same—to put his case
 As strongly as he can ;
 And our great Poet hath taken to-night
 A full advantage of his right.

As for the verse—to me the rhyme
Sounds pleasant, more than the mere time
Of naked metre ; and 'tis clear—
No slight point this—the general ear
Prefers the Poem that abounds
With music of according sounds.”

Then said the Earl : “ Both kinds possess
Their separate merits. Blank verse less
May check th' immediate rush of thought,
And is more like the common speech
Which men make use of, each to each.
Rhyme in its turn, besides being fraught
With music, may itself suggest,
By the necessities of its kind,
Ideas and notions to the mind,
Which else had slumbered unexpressed —

Here, entering without word or knock,
The jailor broke the thread of talk.

He in part kindness came to ask
 If aught was wanted in the cell ;
 And partly to fulfil his task,
 Long-learnt, to spy if all was well.
 A man of fifty he—severe
 In aspect, and whose words were few ;
 Who felt small pity, and less fear,
 To his old hard vocation true ;
 Yet could be won to lenience more
 By the stout heart a prisoner bore
 Beneath his treatment proudly mute,
 Than offered gold or humble suit.

The Earl, when he had left them, cried,
 “ There’s something I would get
 From that man at all costs, which yet
 I know he ne’er will give.”
 “ And what is that ? ” his friends replied.
 Then he : “ There used to live

In this same Tower—perhaps the same
Bald dungeon-room—proscribed and bann'd,
The wearer of my rank and name,
The eighth Earl of Northumberland.
Much should I like to know whose hand
Shot the three bullets through his breast
When innocently laid in rest.
The high Star Chamber Peers decreed
That he himself had done the deed.”

“Murder ! rank murder !” Hues exclaimed.
“Hush !” said the Earl ; “I would not baulk
Your zeal, but such things should be named
In whispers to well trusted ears.
Perchance some Dionysius hears
The thoughts that take the form of talk.”

“Well,” answered Hues, “for some short time—
Too long indeed for such a crime—
Power used the hands, and throats, and eyes
Of letter-forgers, knaves, and spies,

To find if, haply, men might lean
Tow'rd Mary, Scotland's French-bred Queen.
And thus was Earl Northumberland
Selected, watched, traduced, trepann'd.
How did the charge against him square
With his past life and deeds?—'tis there
Truth should be sought for. He drove back

The Scotch invaders from the bounds
Of the East March, and on their track

Pursuing, wasted their own grounds
That side the border—bore away
Men, horse, and cattle as his prey,
And, ere returning as he came,
Left sixteen towns to feed the flame.

No love for Scotland here I ween,
Whate'er his fondness for her Queen.
There, too, the Earl did beard the French,
And there compel them to retrench
Our England's style and quarterings
From the escutcheon of their kings.

A man like this, the more we make
His doings and his nature known,
Would seem more likely far to take
The life of others than his own."

"True. Yet 'tis perilous to discuss
The things, my friend, which happened thus,"
Replied the Earl : " And so might I
Demand in all humility,
' Why am I here ? '—I, too, who paid
My moneys to hire ships, and keep
The Spaniards off, and gave my aid
To sink their vessels in the deep.
Did I not, heart and voice, maintain
Our reigning sovereign's right to reign ?
Yet am I charged with favouring
The powder-plotting 'gainst the king,
Because, though Protestant in creed,
A cousin maybe sowed the seed

Of that disastrous crop." "For those,"
 Cried Hues, "whose work is yet to do
 'Twill be an animating view
 To spy a prison at the close.
 Yet should—how easier 'tis to win
 The gifts of fortune than be just!—
 Your Lordship *not* get out, we trust
 That *we* shall ever more get in."

"I fancy," calmly the Earl said,
 "I shall, when some few years have fled,
 Escape from this; and, if so be,
 For you the sole captivity
 I will inflict will be to sit
 Around my board, nor thence to flit—
 At least with my leave giv'n—until
 You've taken, each and all, your fill."

And the Earl *did* get out at last,
 When fifteen Tower-spent years had past,

And fines and forfeits had made less
His means to spend and power to bless.
Yet did he richly pension all
 Who came to share his prison hours ;
And life, when sloping to its fall,
 Was free of tyrants and of towers.
And what that life was may be drawn
 From all he penned in his defence,
Ere in his prison-house the dawn
 Of Hope had broken to light him thence.

He wrote : " An unambitious ease
With me hath natural power to please ;
This is my gift. Another man's
 May be to guide the reeling State ;
Or, in the war of partisans,
 To rule the tempest of debate.
If I have won some little name
 By larger works of public good,
'Twas Conscience called me, and I came ;
 'Twas duty—not my inborn mood.

'Mid gardens basking in the beam
 Of summer sun, or in green nook
 Reclined, and listening to the stream
 Between the pauses of a book,
 To pass the day, and when it ends
 The converse of congenial friends;
 These were my joys. Where these abound
 Safe resting on the lowly ground,
 Why should I climb the hill whose tops
 Are those from which ambition drops;
 Or, if it stands thereon like some,
 Stands fearful of a fall to come?

"There's something, too, we draw from birth,
 And from the genius of our sires.

One man is earthy, of the earth;

One glows with old ancestral fires.

My fathers were good men and true.

I, their blood's heir, should be heir too

Of their ideas—not be the first

On the strange breast of Time's great

Great was the love the people bore
The wizard Earl. When he was free
From bondage, 'twas a sight to see
Through London town the noble ride ;
He rode amid the cannon's roar ;
He rode 'mong clustering crowds that vied
In shouting welcome. Hands exprest
With proffer'd palm what filled each breast.
Some revered the high-born Peer,
Unto the mass the man was dear.

SIR WALTER RALEIGH.

1. The first part of the document is a list of names and addresses of the members of the committee.

SIR WALTER RALEIGH.

OUTSPAKE the son of a king :
“ In sooth it is a graceless thing ;
None but my father could descend
To mew a bird like that in a cage.”
And worthily spake this princely friend
In the zeal of his uncorrupted age.
Yet such a deed was fitted too,
In a sort, for James the First to do ;
For the son was as little like the sire
As the smoke of a faggot is like its fire.

Come view what manner of man is he
Who is hidden in stale captivity,
And thence some knowledge may be got
Of all that the royal churl is not.

And truly 'tis hard at times to give
A reason for Heaven's rule on high.
'Twas strange that James the sire should live,
While Henry the son was first to die.

This prisoner is dark-haired and tall ;
A many-gifted man, with all
The potency of sword and pen,
And glowing word, and ready deed ;
A rarity of Nature's breed ;
An intellectual king of men.
Immured within this unjust cell,
A Poet and Historian dwell ;
A statesman, with a soldier's hand
And leader's head, by sea and land ;

To learning and to science dear—
And yet there is but one man here.

How largely in his fearless breast
The spirit of adventure grew,
And bid him muse and move, nor rest
From searching earth for something new.
How calmly could he turn and sit
To stamp his thoughts so clear and grave ;
Or blow the floating films of wit,
Or strike the lyre Apollo gave.
If, worthy of the world and him,
An object promised golden fruit,
No passion made his vision dim,
No danger checked him in pursuit.
Ah ! what a cramped and cruel place
For one who should be measuring space
'Twixt North and South and East, to bring
As tribute to his jealous king

All products that enrich or please,
Or sweep his foes from off the seas.

So 'twas when the encircling main
Was laden with the fleets of Spain,
And Philip from the new world drew
Its gold to arm his veteran hosts,
And black towards our English coasts
The storm-cloud of invasion flew,
With thunder pregnant and with flame,
Onward seven mighty squadrons came,
And Parma joined the league of strife
That aimed its blows at England's life.
Among the crew sailed saintly men,
With many a Pope-blest instrument
To torture heretic limbs, and then
Persuade their owners to repent—
To do the body wrong, and make
The mind think rightly for its sake.

Then Raleigh, in war council, spake

Brave words : " Ship, England, all thy guns,
And for impassable ramparts take
The bodies of thy sons ! "

Then Drake and Hawkins rushed to fight.

" On ! " Frobisher and Howard cried ;
And held by day
Their murderous way,
And lit with cannon-lightnings wide
The horizon of the night.

And England's Genius took her stand,
Robed in a cloud of thunder, where
Cape Finisterre arose.

High towering through the murky air,
She shook the tempest from her hand
Upon her country's foes.

On by the storm-wind to their doom
The fleets of Spain were madly driven,
While raged above, with flash and boom,
Th' artillery of heaven.

Upheaved, as by an earthquake's shock,
On iron shore and jagged rock,

The mountainous armaments were flung,
Or scattered o'er the boiling sea;
But on their rear unceasingly

Our ocean captains hung.

Like frightened doves, some vessels spread
Their wings for Calais roads and fled;
But fled in vain, for day and night
The wrath of England tracked their flight.

"Behold, how we and this angry weather!"

Shouted brave Howard, "by sure degrees,
Little by little, and feather by feather,

Do pluck these vultures of the seas."

For ships, like broken toys, were spread,
Dislimbed, on the waves that rose in red;
And the channel was dotted with corpses, while
The battle was fierce off Portland isle.

“Ho! ho! Sidonia’s Duke!” cried Drake,—
And his flushed crew laughed as the sailor spake,---
“Will wish himself and his men at ease
At St. Marie, ’mong his orange-trees.”
And Heaven, that smote with timely death
The politic lord of Santa Cruz,
Heard England’s prayers, as History saith,
And slipt the storm to break and bruise
On rock-bound islands of the West,
And where the Orkneys stud the main,
Torn into shreds, as a rotten vest,
The scattered fleet of Spain.

But who to the great council-place
Than Raleigh more of wisdom brought;
The light of beauty in his face,
Veiled by the shades of thought?
Who more on bloody battle-ground
Dealt latitude of death around?

A man with rare-born power to weave
The web of war with skilful hand,
And who as soldier could achieve
The action which the leader planned.
With stronger arm or wiser brain
Who fought the ambitious hopes of Spain,
From when at first her king intrigued
To aid rebellion's secret toil,
And he with the eighth Gregory leagued
To loose the war on Irish soil?
Alas! that thence on Raleigh's head
There lit the blow he scorned to fly,
And left his traitorous king when dead
Crowned with a shame that cannot die.

Subject and King! 'twere hard to find
Two men so differing 'neath the test.
How tortuous was th' oppressor's mind—
How glorious that of the opprest!

He, with a singular excellence,
 Could turn from council and from fight,
To grow the hues and shapes and scents
 That make the garden a delight ;
To train with scientific care
Fair things to grow more freshly fair ;
And harmonize each new-made scene
Of mountain-slope and level green,
With all the bold effect surprise
Works on the judgment through the eyes,
And the fine skill that, tied to place
And cramped in means, enlarges space.

Garden or field of conflict well

 Would suit that spirit's various taste,
But never this close prison-cell
 Where unused genius runs to waste ;—
Yet not to waste, if such the end
 Of thoughtful nights and studious days,
That for our human world he penned
 Its history for the world to praise.

And he could see a higher Cause

In the world's happenings swaying all ;

The hand of one whom Christians call

The Maker of their unkept laws.

Some thanks to prison-walls are due

That let the active man review,

And clothe in words and range in train

The notions of his wondrous brain.

But this, although enough to fix

The wish of others, was not so

For him ; and not enough to mix

With those who, wont to come and go,

'Twixt the grim Tower and noisy whirl

Of outward life, to cheer it brought

Their gems of wit and wealth of thought

At summons from the wizard Earl.

'Twas not enough to pass the night

With Jonson in poetic flight,

Or torture Nature day by day
By spell of chemical assay,
To bring her secrets to the light.
He hopes beyond ; and should he hope
To win for life a freer scope
And outward action, he must bring
Before the avarice of his King
Rich proofs of profit, and unfold
The vision of Guiana's gold.
Yet tales of treasure left behind
But slightly moved the royal mind.
Visions were pretty—James had heard
Enough of these ; and something more
Than faith was needed. He preferred
The handling of the yellow ore.

Raleigh had sought across the main
The famed Dorado of old Spain.
On with his brave crew he sped,
Searching at the fountain-head

For the one thing that, possess,
Carries with it all the rest ;
Where it hath its virgin birth
In the womb-caves of old earth ;
Or with dun dull lustre shines
Surface-veined in easy mines,
Waiting till dug out to be
Whole fiend or half-deity,
Changing, held, as they who hold,
Are the slaves or lords of gold.
Past the stormy ocean o'er,
Landed on a hostile shore,
On they went through foul and fair,
Only the dark Indians there,
With a natural worshipping,
Said to Raleigh, " Be our King !"
Up the Orinoco's stream,
Under the sun's festering beam ;
By the river's gloomy banks,
Where the trees in towering ranks

Overarch the dangerous flow
Of the cataracts below,
Or where giant mountains rise
Wooded to the burning skies,
What though others failed who spent
Life to win, yet on they went,
Ever onward, though some few
Stayed and slept, whom sickness slew,
On through toil that turned to pain,
Broken meal and steeping rain,
While on all sides, front and back,
Spanish hate hung on their track.

Yet was it of small use to beat
Opposing fraud and foeman down,
And with believing ears to greet
The tale of Manoa's mighty town.
So when bold Raleigh with his crew,
Long absent, sought their native shore,
Envy had worked too well to lower
The worth of things she could not do.

And some men shook their heads, and made
Remarks upon "th' adventurer's trade,"
And "greed," and "travellers' tales," and how
"They 'd like to see what he had seen ;"
And when the subject met his Queen,
Displeasure roughed the regal brow.

How shall the favourite fallen regain
Th' imperial smile ? Leave England—close
In battle with the nation's foes—
And once more crush the power of Spain.
For Cadiz saw a new defeat
Rend limb from limb her giant fleet,
When, lighting the green sea for miles,
The tall ships blazed as funeral piles,
Or like burst fireworks rose on high
In sparks and splinters to the sky.
Flame-scorched, men leapt into the wave,
Which changed the death, but failed to save ;

And many a wounded swimmer plied
His stout arms 'mid the bloody tide,
Till the shot thundered forth to tear
His life out as he struggled there.

Vere, Essex, Howard, as each one strained

To be the first in valour's race,

One ship was foremost in the chase ;

For where the death-shower fiercest rained,

Where most the cannon-lightnings ran

From fort to fort, and wreathed the shore

With sulphur clouds, the ' Warspite ' bore

The might of Raleigh to the van.

And then this man, to show how great

An item he of England's state,

When filled with war, could turn and bend

His mind aside, and take delight

In peaceful dittyng, or attend

Pure Science in her higher flight,

Or thread the mazy path that lies

Through metaphysic subtleties ;

Yet, at the same time, give wise heed

How states are ruled and leagues are made,

And with experienced vision read

The riddles of the statesman's trade.

These did he, not as one who sought

To pass therein an unclaimed hour,

But as he must whose various thought

Is fresh with grace, or strong in power.

But Death hath now from England's throne

Deposed the ancient lioness,

And fortune set a man thereon,

Who, than the rest of kings, hath less

Of all in thought or act that suits

The nature of the nobler brutes.

Again must Raleigh hide his head

In a Tower-dungeon—wherefore so?

He sought for peace—peace! so 'twas said,

With England's old and bitterest foe.

He deemed King James unfit to reign ;
Hence foreign league and trust betrayed—
But who the foe with whom 'twas made ?
O! shame on Cecil were it Spain.
This Spaniard with an English face--
What might not such a traitor dare ?
Empty a heav'n-blest throne, and place
Poor Arabella Stuart there !
Sentenced to death, yet left to live,
That he may daily die, and give
A tyrant's petty mind the bliss
Of troubling such a soul as this !

Then Raleigh wrote his faithful wife
(For love, forbidden, which could bless
With its plucked fruit his earlier life,
When lawful made was not made less) :
" Read my last words—oh ! that my breath
Could fill thy ear therewith—yet keep
The love I send thee unto death.
Still would I not that thou shouldst weep --

Weep overmuch. For all the good

Thou wouldst have had me do, my heart

Is grateful, though my vagrant mood—

Forgive me!—hath done only part.

When I am gone, give, dearest, heed

To fly from an inactive grief,

For thou, to meet thy pressing need,

Wilt find in labour a relief.

Deserted by all friends, what friend

To aid thee dare I recommend?

So to God's love alone I must

Entrust thee—He will keep the trust.

I do not say unto thee try

No second husband; he might be—

How likely!—better far than I;

But now thou art—soon wilt be—free;

Use caution; riches thou hast got

In thine own self; this truth I can

Declare from knowledge—O! cast not

That pearl before some swinish man.

I was denied thee living ; pray

I may be given thee dead ; then keep
These bones for burial far away

In Sherborne where my parents sleep.
Farewell ! When earthly scenes shall close
With all their joys, not over sweet,
God grant, dear wife, that we may meet
In others, and forgive my foes !”

Some sunshine lit at length the life
Of his dull prison ; who can tell
What bounty 'twas that let his wife
Share half the tedium of his cell ?
And if a son there born could prove
The warmth of both the victims' love,
It showed, too, James's lengthened sin
In caging such a bird therein.
But be the favour this, or some
Of narrower or of wider kind,
It is not fitting it should come
Without a greater wrong behind,

So seize on Sherborne ; take his lands,
The fruit of pleasant toil, the pet
Of leisure hours, and in the hands
Of the foul-hearted Somerset
Place them ; there is no fear. Why care
For a mere prisoner or his heir ?
Despoil them both. And if he cry
For justice, let the king reply,
“ Enough to know my will, and bend
Thereto ; I want them for a friend.
That thou art yet alive on earth
Is payment greater than thy worth.
An old charge hangs above thy head,
Be silent lest thou snap the thread.”


But this wise monarch,—ah ! how wise
In Carr’s disinterested eyes,—
Must have more gold, and whether got
By devil or saint, it matters not.
Then loose the victim’s bonds ; again
Let Raleigh cross the western main,

Not freed by justice, but to bring
The sacred metal to his king.
Against the voyage craft and zeal,
All weapons of the statesman's war,
Are launched in vain by Gondomar,
The supple Jesuit of Castile.

Closed the hateful prison-door ;
Out upon the waves once more ;
What a glorious power to please
Have the freely-tumbling seas !
Heaven will surely bless the ship
Where no curse from human lip
Mocks its power, and anthems rise
To the storm-dispensing skies.
Out again to that far land,
Yellow with Pactolean sand ;
Or where metal-laden rills
Bubble down the giant hills.

On, with vision-prompted tread,
Searching at the fountain-head
For the one thing that, possess,
Carries with it all the rest,
Fated, as 'tis used, to be
Whole fiend or half deity.
Onward, to renew the strife
Which wealth-seekers wage for life,
Endless, day by day begun
With fierce rain and steaming sun ;
Hasty rest on fevered soil,
Lessening hope and growing toil,
Finishing as they began,
With the rival hate of man.

The Indians bowed their heads again
To Raleigh's natural majesty,
But he, the king at home could lie
To him, and keep the truth with Spain,



And with most pitiful treason show
His secrets to their common foe.

Why further trace the victim's path,—
Beset by Spain, betrayed by James,—
And how his comrades, in their wrath
Gave Santa Thomè to the flames ;
How with a fruitless courage they
Had skill to plot, and strength to slay,
And left their leader's stricken son
In payment of short battle won ?

Back, then, in England see him ; back,
And charged with,—but what mattered then
What was the charge ? There is no lack
Of proof to damn successful men.
Tried, and found wanting in the stuff
By which his sovereign weighed his worth,
Gold would, if only 'twere enough,
Have covered all the sins of earth.

His child lost, sick, betrayed, and sold,—

Sold by an ignominious king

To his own kingdom's foe,—a thing

To weep for, and to wish untold.

This man, so charged, forbore to pull

The fruit he might have plucked in full ;

Thrust back the Tempter as he cried,

While holding forth the glittering lure,

“ Get gold,—try what the rest have tried ;

Or, fool ! be honest and be poor ! ”

He might have fled, but fled not ; chose,

As was his wont, to face his foes.

He leant on the king's justice,—poor

Was such a reed on which to lean,

For he, to make his victim sure,

Sent him false friends, whose courteous mien,

And offers of their aidance, must

Gain such a heart, to sell its trust.

Again, again in the Tower-jail

Behold him pent who loves not rest,
Nor will his courtly jailor fail

To steal the secrets from his breast ;
And send, for royal eyes to read,

The letters that he writes his wife :
To slay at once were mercy—bleed
The prisoner slowly out of life !

Enough ! the cruel drama draws
To its last act. When kings make laws—
Such kings as James—we may regret,

Not wonder that the blows are hard
Which fear and hatred deal ; so let

A scaffold rise in Palace-yard.
'Tis done. Bring Raleigh forth ! He stands
Beside it with prayer-folded hands.
Not long before his lips had prest
Their last kiss on his wife's pale cheek.

No more he stands ornately drest,

But in plain mourning-suit, and meek

And loving, one whose better mood

Had thriven on sacramental food.

A haggard beauty stamps his face,

But on it there exists no trace

Of trouble ; naught to mark the sense

Of the wrong done him, for he calls

The world a larger prison, whence

Some hourly are ta'en out to die,

As he from his own narrower walls

This day, while others longer lie,

Making but little difference.

" Yet," saith he, " as I hope to turn

My Saviour's passion to my gain,

Guiltless I die. I do not yearn

For life, but to wipe out a stain.

Wicked I have been, I avow,
At courts, in camp, at sea ; this none
Feels more than I,—yet have not done
The thing for which I suffer now.
God pardon—as I pardon—all
My evil-doers, great or small.
No longer shall ambition burn
In me ; adventure charm my life
No more, or love of child or wife
Soothe me as once they did. I turn
For ever from the crowded street,
And greater joy of country fields,
For still it was a sight more sweet
Than all Guiana's mines to me,
To tread the open land, and see
The gold the yellow Ceres yields.
Yes ; now from all I turn, as Time
Shuts up the story of my days,
To visions beyond thought sublime,
And on that cross I fix my gaze,

Whereon, in ages long gone by
My Saviour and my sins did die.
Thrice-blest were he whom death should call

From earthly throne and earthly care,
To take, although the lowest there,
A seat within heaven's bribeless hall."

Then, turning to the headsman, "Why
Be careful that, when placed, my sight
Be tow'rd the East? If hearts be right
It matters not how heads may lie.

This axe,—nay, suffer me—I like
So sharp a cure for evil. Strike!
Be quick! My ague-hour is near,
And I may seem to shake from fear.
Strike, man! Of what art *thou* afraid?"

And with the word down flashed the blade,
And the head fell; this, during life,
She fondly kept who was his wife,

But left his country's heart to be
The shrine that keeps his memory.

England forgets not him who claimed
For his the universe of wit ;
Who aimed at all things, and who hit
The things at which his genius aimed.
He tower'd o'er other men, who praised
The prideless worth of one that raised
Himself so high, yet not above
The reach of his companions' love.

Raleigh and James ! 'Tis 'long long since
Dead earth lies heavy on the two ;
And of the subject and the prince,
We, who are safe, may say what's true.
Strange pity 'twas how power was then
More able than in times more near
To deaden hope, or raise a fear
Within the breast of better men.

How many a moral we may draw

From what our fathers bore or saw.

Worth is eclipsed where tyrants shine,

So, 'tis a question grave,—

If kings are made by right divine,

What is it makes a slave ?

**WILLIAM MAXWELL, EARL OF
NITHSDALE.**



WILLIAM MAXWELL, EARL OF
NITHSDALE.

THE Tower rose greyly in evening shade,
And the dungeon grew more dim,
Where Nithsdale sat, and counted the hours
Of life yet left for him.

Sadly he thought of the brilliant past,
In the colours of Hope arrayed,
And then of the morrow's shouting crowd,
And flash of the headsman's blade.

For he, though noble in heart and blood,
A rebel had dared to be
To the royal chief whom Englishmen
Brought over the German sea.

His wife,—O why doth she linger yet ?
The wonted hour is past :
But, come she early, or come she late,
He knows she will come at last.

Hark ! the door moves, and there she stands
Scarce drest in her usual guise.
Is the night air cold ? Or would she hide
Her sorrow from curious eyes,

Some friends of her own sex, too, she brought
To visit that fatal cell ;
But only a single friend at once
Might utter a last farewell ;

For they who ruled the land had said
That two at a time might see
And cheer the prisoner in his grief,
Though they were sad as he.

Yet was there such passing to and fro,
That hardly the guards could say
Who was it walked in, and who walked out,
Who stayed and who went away.

But they have gone ; ye might search the world,
Nor many such friends could find ;
With faltering steps they went, and left
The wife with her lord behind.

Oh ! who, if he could, would dare describe

That last sad interview,—

The sighs and tears, and the broken speech,

And the grief that grew and grew !

The kiss that is the last hath less

Of sweetness than of pain ;

And words are bitter from the lips

That never must speak again.

And still the jailor heard her voice

As ever he passed the door ;

And each time that he passed it seemed

That her words were more and more.

And the last, “ My husband is my king !

Would I, as a loyal wife,

For all the wrong they have charged on thee

Could answer, life for life ! ”

WILLIAM MAXWELL, EARL OF NITHSDALE

And then she past out from that room,

While they who gazing stood

Exclaimed, " 'Twas a shame a traitorous man

Should have a wife so good."

Time fled, and the jailor sought the cell

And cried, on entering there,

"Late hours will give you an appetite,

My lord, for our prison fare."

No voice in reply, no motion stirred ;

And his eyes searched round and round,

And he lighted a light, and searched again,

But sought what he never found.

No living thing but himself was there,

But before him, soiled and torn,

There lay, as it were cast off in haste,

The clothes that a man had worn.

'Twas a near escape ; 'twas a woman's work ;
And the work was nobly done ;
For the wind blows fair for Calais roads,
And the race for life is won !

THE THAMES.



THE THAMES.

THROUGH many a land, from age to age, what
mighty streams have rolled

By scenes of glorious deeds, or borne their argosies of
gold.

Ilissus ! Ganges ! Nile ! We glow at mention of each
name,

Or of that vale where Tiber laves the sepulchre of
Fame.

But for the spots which History loves, or nature makes
divine,

No river unto English hearts flows half so dear as
mine ;

In my whole life from Trewsbury, my birthplace in
the West,
To where, like weary child, I sink on Ocean's mother
breast.

Whether I run by regal town, or village green afar ;
Glide by a poet's cot, or float the castle-ships of war ;
Whether I make an angler's sport, or as a highway
flow
For a world-clasping trade, what stream a course like
mine can show ?

I call up dreams of Godstow's nuns ; of learning and
her bowers,
As with a double name I run by Oxford's classic
towers.

What thoughts to various memory dear the sight of
Windsor brings,—
The home of ancient chivalry, the burial-place of
kings !

What man that hates a chain, and calls his freedom
 life indeed,
But burns within his soul to hear the sound of
 ‘Runnymede!’
Come further on with me and say what eye can coldly
 view
Hampton’s long aisles, or Richmond’s hill, or many-
 featured Kew.

Scant need to speak of all I pass of beauty and renown
When, in my larger life, I sweep by London’s giant
 town ;—

A world ashore, a world afloat ; the mart of wealth and
 worth,
The haunt of universal man, the centre-spot of earth !

Housed in a town of ships, what freight I bear upon
 my breast !

What mighty highways arch it, worn by feet that never
 rest !

By day and night I'm ploughed by keels, or lit by
countless fires,

While o'er me floats the sound of bells swung from a
thousand spires.

Close by that grey and gloomy Tower, I roll my
sluggish flood :

To fit the spirit of the spot its stream should flow in
blood,

For History fears to tell the tales of what she witness'd
there,


Of all that's sad or bad in life,—its crimes and its
despair.

My wave, that echoes oft with shouts from rivals in
the race,

Becomes, in turn, some wretch's tomb—a refuge from
disgrace,

When they, whom man hath cursed with blame, hope
in my depths to find

A quick release from present care, whatever comes
behind.



Away! where Greenwich rears her halls, or Science
 sheds her light

At Woolwich, teaching men to forge the lightnings of
 the fight.

Away! my billows higher rise; each bank becomes a
 shore

As in my flight I leave behind the light-ship of the
 Nore.

On, on; the two Reculvers past, my term of life draws
 nigh,

Before me spreads the ancient sea,—'tis glorious there
 to die;

Lost in the waters, o'er whose crests my country's
 vessels sweep,—

The delegates of air-born Jove, the thunderers of the
 deep!

LONDON :
PRINTED BY W. CLOWES AND SONS, STAMFORD STREET,
AND CHARING CROSS.



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